

LETTER WRITING



— MORTON —

P-
William G. Brandt.

LETTER WRITING

BY

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SUGGESTIONS, PRECEPTS
AND EXAMPLES FOR THE
CONDUCT OF BUSINESS AND
SOCIAL CORRESPONDENCE

(REVISED EDITION)

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PREFACE

These pages would never have been written were it not that a faint Macedonian cry has reached the ear of the author,—from puzzled school-girls inditing their first epistles; from clerks doubtful how best to write an application, or answer an advertisement; from the novice in conventional correspondence; from the bashful youth with nosegay wilting for lack of a suitable accompanying note; from busy householders, careful and troubled about many things, but chiefly at a loss how to say discreetly what they know must be said in the numerous letters which business or social responsibility force

them to write ; from some to whom the land of letters is an—almost—undiscovered country, but one on whose confines they occasionally find themselves.

To these, and all others who pause in similar perplexity this little guide offers its services ; glad if it may help some one to unchain his captive thought and give the prisoner a speedy release.



PART I

PRELIMINARY TALKS

LETTER WRITING

CHAPTER I

STYLE AND DICTION

A few generations ago it was the fashion for ambitious young writers to form their style on that of some illustrious author. The young writer of to-day has no ambition thus to perpetuate the fame of another; but rather, he strives to distinguish himself by some stroke of originality. The style at which he aims is essentially spontaneous and individual.

Under these modern conditions the availability of exact model letters is limited. The approved forms of conventional correspondence may be copied verbatim, or with slight verbal changes to suit circumstances, but the chief value of model letters of the informal, or spontaneous, class is to give an illustration of the proper tone and spirit and style of such messages. In this satirical age nothing is more subjected to ridicule than a copied letter when its character is discovered. But one may follow a model in its essential points without copying it literally. The tact and good sense of the letter-

writer will restrain him from ludicrous misappropriation of a model letter form.

A well-written letter is equivalent to a well-managed conversation. Its literary style should be adapted to the theme and the occasion. A letter of friendship written in the brief style of a commercial order would be abrupt, if not rude ; a business message interlarded with rambling personal references would be ridiculous. It is such incongruity between style and subject that forms a basis for the burlesque in letter-writing.

An easy and graceful style of correspondence is possible to those only who have a good command of words and a clear idea of definitions. "Study the dictionary" may sound like the setting of a prosy task. But an occasional hour spent in searching out the obscure roots of common words, or tracing the gradations of meaning in a series of synonyms, will soon show significantly in the enlarged vocabulary of an intelligent writer.

I remember a small boy who became fascinated with this study ; and many a rainy day he spent in the library, poring over the Unabridged. A few years later, when the spelling-match mania prevailed, he spelled down all of his young competitors, and many champions of riper years, and nonplussed the Judge by his discrimination in definitions. To-day he is a successful correspondent and editor ; and no readier or more terse pen than his can be found in the ranks of journalism. His voluntary choice of the dictionary as

a source of recreation was probably no small factor of his present skill in the use of his native tongue.

Certain it is that this graceful command of language is not acquired in a day ; nor can any hasty cramming process on some special occasion hide the ignorance of those who habitually neglect this study of words. The experience of Sam Weller, in the writing of his memorable "valentine," pictures the straits in which such an one finds himself when he comes face to face with the task of writing an all-important letter, with no idea how to begin—except by abruptly confessing the all too deeply realized fact that he "finds himself circumvented."

Do not wait until you have a letter to write to some distinguished person. Study the dictionary, now and every day, here a little and there a little ; and the seeds of knowledge thereby implanted will germinate and in time grow to a golden harvest of cultured speech. Then you will not need that I or any one should tell you how to write a letter. The precise words that embody your ideas will come at your bidding. And somewhere, somebody, receiving the white-winged messenger of your thoughts, will be better, wiser, happier—because you studied the dictionary.

CHAPTER II

A FEW GRAMMATICAL POINTS

What is the use of writing a letter unless one's meaning is made clear? Messages misunderstood may cause a breach of friendship, or a serious business complication. It is related that on one occasion a wholesaler, wishing to ascertain the financial standing of a merchant who was buying on time, telegraphed to the bank on which the merchant's checks were drawn, stating the case, and inquiring, "Is he good for the amount?" The terse reply of the bank official, was: "Not good for any amount," but a careless operator made the message read: "Note good for any amount." On the strength of this the wholesaler shipped the goods, only to find, later on, that he had been swindled. So small a thing as a silent "e" had worked a thousand dollars' worth of mischief.

The incident is analogous to the many cases wherein vague or ambiguous expression gives rise to doubtful interpretation of the messages intended to be conveyed by familiar letters. We are often compelled to decide the meaning of our correspondent not so much by what he actually says, as by what we have reason to believe he would be most likely to think. Through faulty punctuation, or misplaced phrases, or words that are not at

all the words that he meant to use, he may say just what he did not intend to say. By double negatives he may unconsciously contradict his most emphatic assertions. We must take this into consideration, and make allowance for all errors that we know to be habitual to the writer before we can be quite sure what precise message we are to glean from his sentences. Thus indulgent friendship is imposed upon, and we patiently endure the infliction of poorly-written letters for the sake of the honest intentions with which we accredit the writers.

So long as the messages are only those of sentiment and social interchange between persons already well acquainted no greater disaster may result than the momentary perplexity that attends the reading of the message. But when letters from comparative strangers are written in such a blundering way imperfect or erroneous ideas are sure to be conveyed. Sometimes a disagreeable impression is made that subsequent explanations can never efface. Friendships are nipped in the bud ; and those who might have been genial companions are estranged because the really kind sentiments that they would have been glad to express, had they known how, were garbled at the point of their tactless pens. On the other hand, the clear, graceful style of a skillful letter-writer may create such a favorable impression of the writer as will lead to the establishing of a congenial friendship between persons hitherto strangers, but now introduced to each other through the

medium of a business or professional correspondence ; an experience not unusual, when a bright, cultivated man occupies the secretary's desk at either end of the line.

A dispassionate critic will interpret the language of a letter according to its grammatical and rhetorical construction, aided by punctuation. It is not the purpose of a volume of this character to include a course of language lessons. Numerous clever text-books are in use in the schools, and any person who lacks the knowledge of grammar can readily find a book suited to his needs and comprehension.

For the benefit of any who may need the caution, a few of the more common blunders in grammar are here pointed out.

1. *The use of a singular verb with a plural subject, and the reverse.*

EXAMPLES

Horses eats oats, should be Horses eat oats.

The bridges was burned, should be The bridges were burned.

Was you there? should be Were you there?

Neither of them are finished, should be Neither (one) of them is finished.

Each of them are half done, should be Each (one) of them is half done.

Both of us is going, should be Both of us (together) are going.

The Legislature are in session, should be The Legislature (as a body) is in session.

The Legislature is discussing the measure, should be The Legislature (members one with another) are discussing the measure.

A crowd were surging through the street, should be A crowd (as one mass) was surging through the street.

The congregation was attentive, should be The congregation (many individuals) were attentive.

The company are disbanded, should be The company (as an organization) is disbanded.

Conflict of Sound and Sense.

In sentences where a modifying phrase containing a plural noun comes between a singular subject and its verb, the ear is sometimes deceived by the sound; and a plural verb is used, to answer to the sound of the nearest (plural) noun.

EXAMPLES

That grade of goods are unreliable—(. . . grade . . . is).

A box of specimens were forwarded—(. . . box . . . was).

A list of the most conspicuous mistakes are here printed—(list . . . is printed).

This variety of peaches are in market early—
(variety. . . is.).

Also, when by inversion or peculiar collocation the subject and its verb are out of their usual relative position, similar errors occur.

EXAMPLE

Designs for chenille table-covers into which are wrought a tinsel thread (into which a tinsel thread is wrought).

Mistakes like the above occur chiefly in long or complex sentences. As a safeguard analyze the sentence to find the subject and its verb, and see that they agree in person and number.

2. *Confused use of the past tense and past participles of verbs.*

EXAMPLES

We come home yesterday—(we came).

Its like was never saw before—(was never seen).

He had went—(had gone).

They done their work well—(they did).

I seen them raise the derrick—(I saw them).

GUIDE IN THESE CASES.—If an auxiliary verb is used in predicate (is, was, has, have, had, etc.) the participle follows it, to complete the predicate. If no auxil-

lary is introduced, the past tense of the verb is the correct word to use.

2. *Misuse of Pronouns.*

EXAMPLES

Errors in Cases.

Her and me went—(she and I).

The house belongs to John and I—(to John and (to) me).

Who is this John who you so often mention?—(whom you—mention).

Errors in Person and Number.

Any one buying their ticket elsewhere runs a risk of being cheated—(any one buying his (or her) ticket).

Everybody has their own opinion—(everybody has his (or her) own opinion).

Misuse of the pronoun Them for the adjective Those.

Them hats that hang on them hooks belong to them boys—(Those hats—those hooks—those boys).

4. *Confusion of Adverbs of manner with Adjectives that qualify.*

EXAMPLES

She looked beautifully—(she looked (what?)—beautiful).

She sang sweet—(she sang (how?) sweetly).

RULE.—Qualifying Adjectives answer the question **WHAT** after the verb, and always express an attribute of the subject. Adverbs of manner answer the question **HOW** after the verb, and always describe the manner of the action expressed by the verb.

5. *Double Negatives.*

Two negatives equal one affirmative. Do not tell her no more of your history, is equivalent to saying, Do tell her some more of your history.

I didn't get no paper, therefore, I did get some paper.

These errors occur chiefly in connection with such expressions as didn't, wasn't, hadn't, and other combinations of auxiliary verbs with the adverb not. They characterize hasty and inelegant speech, and mark an illiterate letter writer.

6. *Wrong use of Shall and Will, Should and Would.*

Shall and will have significance in the first person exactly opposite to their significance in the second and third persons.

ILLUSTRATIONS

I shall go (in all probability).

You shall go }
They shall go } (by my command or determination).

I will go (my determination is to go).

You will go } (merely my prediction concerning
 They will go } your going.)

EXAMPLES OF MISUSE

Oh! I will drown and nobody shall help me! (I shall—nobody will).

As a guide to the correct use of shall and will, should and would, Richard Grant White quotes the following lines from Sir George Etherege's, "She would if she could" (1704).

"How long I shall love him I can no more tell
 Than, had I a fever, when I should be well.
 My passion shall kill me before I will show it,
 And yet I would give all the world did he know it."

7. *Superfluous words.*

EXAMPLES

To be given away gratis (omit gratis).

They are equally of the same weight (omit equally, or say, of equal weight).

That there man lives in this here house (omit there and here).

Come out from down in under the table (omit down in).

He fell down from the fence and rose up from the ground (omit down and up).

Do not, except in legitimate hyperbole, add more or most, or other intensives to ideas that are already as intense as they can be.

EXAMPLES

More complete.

The very best, and the very worst.

A more unlimited view

The roundest ball.

Again, do not use the terms **universal**, **universally**, when speaking of things that are liable to limitation. Example: Instead of **universally** beloved say **generally** beloved.

In general, beware of the **universal** and the **superlative**, their too frequent use indicates a lack of discrimination.

8. *Erroneous use of Prepositions and Conjunctions.*

EXAMPLES

The book fell on the floor (to the floor).

In comparison to him (comparison with him).

I differ with you (differ from you).

I am averse from that (averse to that).

They are going over the bridge (across the bridge).

He was acquitted from the charge (acquitted of the charge).

I cannot say as I would (I cannot say that I would).

The ship is not as large as it seems (not so large as it seems).

Except I am detained (unless I am detained).

Similar errors could be quoted by hundreds. Vague ideas of the relations of things are the basis of these mistakes. A clear idea of these relations is the safeguard.

9. *Miscellaneous.*

EXAMPLES

The best of the two (the better of the two).

Either of the three (any one of the three, or **any** larger number. Either refers to two only).

I have only two or three alternatives. (An alternative is one that may take the place of the one I already have. In any given case, I have only one alternative, though possibly two or more choices.)

A couple of chairs (two chairs. Couple refers only to two things inseparably joined).

A pair of carriages (two carriages. Pair refers to two things that answer to each other in use, as, A pair of gloves).

These selected illustrations may serve to show the necessity for careful attention to little things. The most troublesome grammatical blunders may hide in some apparently insignificant word or phrase, and thus creep into one's unguarded phraseology.

I have heard really clever people declare that gram-

mar was their weak point. Let all who realize this fact set about strengthening their grammatical understanding, by the use of well-written text-books on the one hand, on the other—best of all—by constantly noting the example of educated and polished people, whose speeches and writings embody correct current usage.

One of the most brilliant extemporaneous speakers of the day has frankly said that he made a practice of reading twenty or thirty pages of Macaulay just before he was to make an important speech. Not that he plagiarized Macaulay, or even quoted from him; for the theme of the writer was probably entirely foreign to the speaker's subject. But the easy flow of words, the graceful spontaneity of style, the musical rhythm, and the buoyancy of spirit—these clung to the orator, and helped his own thoughts to find like mediums of expression. The letter-writer, as well as the speech-maker, may gain much in ease and copiousness of language by frequent communing with such spirits as Walter Scott, Charles Lamb, and our own Irving and Hawthorne.

CHAPTER III

PUNCTUATION, CAPITAL LETTERS, ABBREVIATIONS, SOME PROVERBS OF GENERAL APPLICATION.

PUNCTUATION

A pointed remark not unfrequently owes its point to the skillful use of the points of punctuation. They are the finger-posts that guide the reader when, otherwise, the meeting of the roads—in complex phrasing—might leave him in doubt which way to go. Be careful in your letters to set these guide-boards along the highway of your thought, that he who runs may read.

BRIEF RULES

1. *The Period* (.).

A Period is required:

After each declarative and imperative sentence,

After each abbreviation;

After all signatures to letters or other documents.

2. *The Semicolon* (;).

A Semicolon is required:

Between clauses or members that are disconnected in sense;

At the end of a clause that is to be followed by an explanatory phrase introduced by *as*, namely, that is ; *as*, The day was fair ; that is, for April.

In long sentences to separate parts that are subdivided by commas ; *as*, He was tall, spare, and agile ; and, considering his years, remarkably youthful in appearance.

3. *The Colon (:)*.

A Colon is required :

To separate the parts of a sentence that are subdivided by commas ;

After words that introduce a formal quotation or enumeration ; *as*, He spoke as follows : " Ladies and gentlemen," etc. ; " Please send the following articles : " etc. ;

After any word or expression that is grammatically complete in itself, but which is to be immediately followed by a word or words, amplifying or elucidating the idea ; *as*, the secondary titles of books : " Evangeline : A Tale of Acadie."

4. *The Comma (,)*.

A Comma is required :

To set off a short quotation informally introduced ; *as*, Who said, " Give me liberty or give me death ? "

To set off co-ordinate clauses, and subordinate clauses not restrictive ; *as*, " Time is priceless, though we seldom realize it."

To set off transposed phrases or clauses ; as, When my work was finished, I departed.

To set off interposed words or phrases ; as, I should prefer, other things being equal, to live in New York.

To mark an ellipsis, or the omission of some important word that is understood from the context, and its place indicated by the comma ; as, Talent is something ; tact, everything.

To separate words or phrases in a series ; as, Oxygen, hydrogen, carbon, and nitrogen.

To set off words that are independent ; as, Allow me, Mr. President, to explain.

To prevent ambiguity where phrases might otherwise be confused with each other. (This last instance is better avoided by a clearer construction of the sentence.)

5. *The Dash (—).*

The Dash is employed :

To set off a parenthetical word or phrase ; as, Something—no matter what—has much annoyed me.

To indicate a break, or sudden change in the thought ; as, Man's mind—what is it but a convex glass— etc.

6. *The Interrogation Point (?).*

The Interrogation Point is used after every question ; as. Can this be true ?

7. *The Exclamation Point (!).*

The Exclamation Point is used after every exclamatory expression ; as, Ah ! Oh, I am so glad !

8. *The Parenthesis ().*

The marks of Parenthesis enclose a parenthetical expression used by the writer. If, in reviewing or quoting an author, the editor or critic interpolated any comments, they are inclosed in brackets [].

9. *Quotation Marks (" ").*

Quotation Marks are used to enclose verbal quotations ; as, He said, " I would not go now though they besought me with tears."

When the quotation is varied slightly in wording to adapt it to the sentence into which it is woven the single comma and apostrophe are used ; as, He said that ' he would not go now though they besought him with tears.'

10. *The Hyphen (-).*

The Hyphen is little used in writing, except to connect the words of an arbitrary or unusual compound ; as never-to-be-forgotten.

CAPITAL LETTERS

Capital Letters mark some individuality or prominence in the words in which they are used.

The following always begin with a capital :

The first word of every sentence ;

Proper names, and adjectives derived from them (America, American).

All titles applied to the Deity ; also all pronouns used with these nouns ; as, The Lord is in His holy temple.

Every line of poetry ;

The pronoun I, and the exclamation O ;

Official and honorary titles ; as, Honorable, General, etc.

Titles of books, and principal words in headings of chapters, etc. ;

The names of the days of the week, and the months of the year ;

Names, or leading words in names, of religious denominations and other organizations of fixed title ; as, Presbyterian ; Grand Army of the Republic.

The first word of formal quotations ; as, Lawrence Sterne said : " The Lord tempers the wind to the shorn lamb."

Each separate item in a written account.

Common nouns personified ; as, Cease, fond Nature, cease thy strife.

Finally, any word that is not usually prominent may, for specific or whimsical reasons, be made so by using a capital for its initial letter ; as, His speeches are filled, like his mind, with Great I.

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are admissible as a rule:

Of Titles attached to names; as, Rev., Dr., Mrs., Hon. J. P. Lawton, LL. D.

Of chronological terms; as, Feb., Dec., Weds., etc.

Of geographical names; as, Mich., for Michigan.

Of titles of orders and societies; as, O. S. B. (Order of Saint Benedict). Y. M. C. A. (Young Men's Christian Association).

In formal correspondence only fixed titles accompanying proper names are abbreviated. All other words, including names of societies and orders in formal announcements, are written in full; even the date being given in words, not figures. (See Forms for Invitations, etc.)

It is better to follow this rule, **except**, perhaps, in the matter of the date, in all social correspondence. A good maxim of style would be No abbreviations whatever. It takes very little more time to write February than Feb., and it gives to the letter an air of deliberateness that implies respect for the person addressed; whereas a letter full of curt abbreviations suggests impatient haste, and conveys the idea that the writer begrudged **the time** that he gave to the matter. A vague slight is **inferred** and resented by the recipient.

SOME PROVERBS OF GENERAL APPLICATION

1. Letters to a stranger, concerning one's own affairs or interests and requiring an answer, should always enclose a stamp, or, better still, a stamped envelope ready addressed for the return of the answer. The latter is not necessary in addressing firms or organizations that send out all correspondence officially, and in envelopes stamped with their peculiar insignia; as, National Head-quarters, G. A. R.; Century Publishing Company; etc. In such cases the stamp is sufficient.

2. Letters requiring an answer should receive prompt attention. In acknowledging the receipt of a letter always mention its date; as, Your letter of the 15th instant is received.

3. Do not dwell upon apologies or explanations of delays. Do not repeat several times in the course of your letter, "Oh! I am so sorry that I have been too busy to write," nor amplify the various causes. A brief paragraph should contain all that is to be said about it.

4. Do not write letters with a lead-pencil.

5. Avoid possible grammatical and rhetorical blunders by using short sentences and simple words.

6. Never send an anonymous letter. It is so common a device of sneaks and blackmailers that respectable people cannot afford to rest under the suspicion of it. Never pay any attention to an anonymous letter, or any other form of postal impertinence sent to yourself.

7. Never write a letter when excited or angry. Sleep over the subject ; and, though your candid views may remain unchanged to-morrow, your manner of writing them will be more discreet when a cooler head dictates the language.

8. Never put one of the important messages of your letter into a postscript—a thing usually done by writers whose letters are so poorly constructed as to require this awkward addendum. Postscripts are rarely admissible, never in good style.

9. Be more conservative in writing than in conversation. Words written may be read by other and less friendly eyes than those for which they were intended. Preserve your dignity, however frank and affectionate your letters may be ; then you need not care who sees them.

10. One is seldom criticized for taking too much pains with a letter. Certainly no correspondent will resent the delicate compliment that is implied by a carefully written letter.

CHAPTER IV

THE STRUCTURE OF A LETTER

The following distinct steps mark the progress of a letter:

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 1. The Heading. | 4. The Subscription. |
| 2. The Address. | 5. The Signature. |
| 3. The Message. | 6. The Superscription |

The accompanying diagrams indicate the proper place on the page or envelope for these several parts.

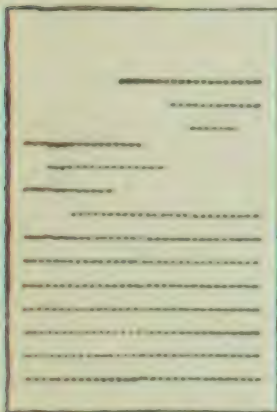


DIAGRAM 1.
(Opening page of letter.)

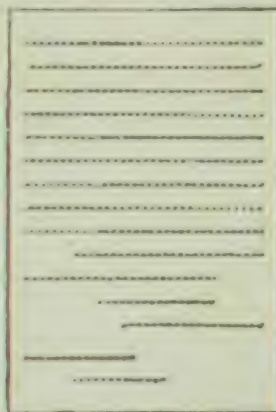


DIAGRAM 2.
(Closing page of letter.)

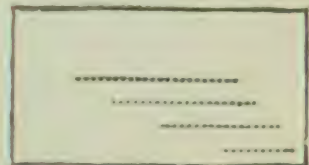


DIAGRAM 3.

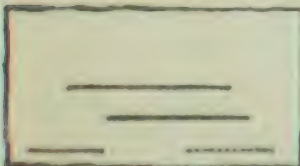


DIAGRAM 4.



DIAGRAM 5.



DIAGRAM 6.

THE HEADING

The Heading includes the Place and the Date, and occupies the two or three short lines at the upper right corner of the opening page. (Diagram 1.)

EXAMPLES

39 UNION SQUARE,	THE TRAYMORE,
NEW YORK CITY,	ATLANTIC CITY, N. J.,
June 15, 1890.	March 11, 1891.

BERWYN, PA.,
July 18, 1890.

In notes sent by a messenger to a person in the same town the Heading is usually omitted, and the date is indicated simply by writing the name of the day of the week, as, "Tuesday morning," either at the upper left corner of the first page, or at the lower left corner of the closing page. (This latter position is often given to the full date, instead of including it, with the place, in the Heading; but this arrangement is allowed only in connection with the business form of Address.)

THE ADDRESS

The Address occupies the short lines to the left at the beginning of the letter. (Diagram 1.) It may have either of two forms.

1. *The Business Form.*

This form gives the full name of the individual or firm addressed, usually with the post-office address, and with or without a complimentary phrase of address.

EXAMPLES

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS, MR. JOHN K. BARTON,	
NEW YORK CITY.	FARGO, DAKOTA.
GENTLEMEN:	DEAR SIR:

MRS. L. D. STEVENS,	MR. PERCY LESTER:
SACO, MAINE.	
DEAR MADAM:	

2. *The Military Form.*

The Military Address is used in official correspondence, and is the more graceful and respectful style for social letters.

In this form merely the title, or a complimentary address (as General, Dear Sir, My Dear Kathleen) is written at the beginning of the letter, and the full name and title, with the place of residence, is written at the close of the letter (in the place indicated by the short lines in the lower left corner, Diagram 2).

EXAMPLES

GENERAL:

MAJOR-GEN. GEORGE G. MEADE,
COMMANDING THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

MADAM:

MRS. J. L. DYER,
AIKEN,
S. C.

Many variations are made to adapt the style of address to the degrees of formality; but one rule holds in all; namely, that either the address proper, or the subsequent writing below shall furnish the full name and address of the person for whom the letter is designed.

THE MESSAGE

The Message is the body of the letter: whatever the writer has to communicate.

THE SUBSCRIPTION

The Subscription is the term applied to whatever phrases of compliment are used as a graceful conclusion and a neat connecting-link between the Message and the Signature; as,

“With many thanks for your kindly interest, I beg to subscribe myself

“Yours, with deep respect,”

“Accept my best regards, and believe me ever

“Yours most sincerely,”

Various polite phrases are used in brief subscriptions. “Very sincerely yours,” “Yours truly,” are usually appropriate, and neutral as to the degree of intimacy in-

volved. A change of adverbs gives many varieties to the idea of "Yours;" "cordially," "faithfully," "regretfully," etc. The general tone and character of the message should be sustained in the subscription. A note conveying a severe repulse could not properly close with "Cordially yours," nor should a message of impulsive affection be wound up with a curt "Yours," etc.

THE SIGNATURE

The Signature is the name of the writer, and with the Subscription occupies the place indicated by the short lines at the right, at the close of the letter (Diagram 2), as,

"Very sincerely yours.

"EDWARD B. LAYTON."

In business and formal correspondence, or in the case of any important letter, the name should be written in full, as it would appear in a legal document or on a bank draft; but in familiar notes, home letters, etc., less exact signatures are allowable. Thus, according to the nature of his correspondence, Mr. Edward B. Layton may sign his name variously, Edward B. Layton, E. B. Layton, E. B. L., Edward, Ned.

THE SUPERScription

The Superscription is written on the outside of the envelope. (Diagrams 3, 4, 5, and 6 indicate the location

of lines on the envelope.) It includes the name of the person addressed, and the place of delivery. If the latter is a town having a carrier office the residence (street and number) is given, as well as the name of the town and State. For foreign letters, the name of the country is added.

EXAMPLES

THE PENN PUBLISHING CO.,
PHILADELPHIA,
923 Arch St., PA.

MRS. ELLEN JOYCE,
FANWOOD,
UNION CO.,
NEW JERSEY.

MR. JOHN C. HUNTER,
RIDLEY PARK,
DELAWARE CO., PA.

MESSRS. LONGMANS & CO.,
39 PATERNOSTER ROW,
LONDON,
ENGLAND.

The requisites of a well-written superscription are:

Precise position and spacing of lines.

Distinct and orderly sequence of items.

Legible writing of words and figures.

Some Special Points as to forms of address:

A gentleman is addressed, socially: Mr. Brown, Dear Mr. Brown, My dear Mr. Brown. (Familiarly the Christian name may be substituted; as, My dear Fred, etc. In business, or with formality: Sir, Dear

Sir. (Mr. Brown; Sir, is somewhat tautological; it is better to use one or the other, not both.)

A business firm is addressed in the business form, with or without adding the complimentary address: Gentlemen; this addition makes the address more personal, and more courteous.

A Company may appropriately and without discourtesy be addressed without the added Gentlemen—since the idea is less personal. The plural Dear Sirs is never proper.

In addressing the higher orders of the clergy, and state or military officials, in their official capacity, the proper honorary titles should be used. A Bishop is addressed as, Reverend Sir—or Reverend and Dear Sir, etc. Any clergyman may receive the same address as a mark of deference or formality.

Executive and commanding officers, and heads of departments are addressed by title; as, Mr. President, Governor, General, Mr. Secretary, etc.

Members of legislative bodies are addressed: Hon. John Brown; Sir (or Dear Sir). By popular complimentary custom, every elected office-holder is addressed as Honorable. Strictly, the title of Hon. belongs to members of the Federal Congress and the Senate, and Judges of the higher courts, or other officials of equal dignity.

Where no definite official or professional reason exists for using a special title of address, Sir, or Gentlemen, is always in order.

The sub-title *Esquire* implies some connection with legal matters. It properly belongs to members of the bar, justices of the peace, and lesser officials of the courts. As popularly used—attached to any and every man's name—it has no significance, and adds no distinction. It merely shows that the writer is making a vague effort to be complimentary ; and is most liberally used by the illiterate, often with absurd inappropriateness ; as, Rev. Prof. John Mott, Esq.

A married lady or a widow is addressed: *Mrs. Brown* ; *Dear Mrs. Brown* ; *Madam* ; *Dear Madam*.

An unmarried lady is addressed: *Miss Brown* ; *Dear Miss Brown* ; *My dear Miss Brown*. (Familiarly, the Christian name may be used ; *My dear Caroline*, etc.) In a business letter, or a letter from a stranger, *Madam*, and *Dear Madam*, are equally appropriate in addressing married or single ladies ; since the English form ignores the French distinction.

Dear Miss, is never proper. It sounds like an affectionate overture from an inferior, or an ignorant person.

Some perplexity is expressed as to the proper way to address a servant. Shall *Thomas O'Brien*, the gardener, be *Mr.*, or not ? According to transatlantic custom, no. But there is no American reason why not. And if the cook is a married woman or a widow of mature years, why (except it be her personal preference) should it be proper to call her *Janet*, instead of *Mrs. Potts* ? Her wedding-ring gives her the title ; why should it not be recognized ?

CHAPTER V

MATERIALS

No one can do skillful work without the proper materials and tools. Given a block of flawless marble, a chisel of faultless edge—and the genius of Powers solved the problem. Without these tangible factors the Greek Slave would have remained the sculptor's dreamy ideal ; a secret thought now buried with his pulseless heart.

It may sound grandiloquent to say that the letter-writer is to an equal degree dependent on the material adjuncts of his work. But we all know that our opinion of a correspondent is prejudiced by the appearance of his letter. A clumsy sheet of coarse paper covered with untidy lines and crammed into an ill-fitting envelope, is not prepossessing. A letter put together in that shape may be well-meant, but unfortunately it can never be well-received. A testimonial that ought to carry weight may be tossed aside as worthless because the very paper on which it is written discovers the writer to be devoid of the delicately discriminating taste without which his testimonial can have no value in the estimation of people of refined instincts.

It will not do to catch up any fragment of paper that happens to be at hand, to go hunting over the house for

a stray pen and a half-evaporated inkstand, to improvise a writing-pad out of the rough cover of an old book whereon to scribble a half-legible message—the shiftless method liable to be followed by those who make no thoughtful provision of writing materials.

Dear to the heart of a systematic letter-writer is a well-stocked escreteire. It may be a beautifully carved oaken desk, with all the luxurious appointments that the cabinet-maker can devise; or it may be the little square cherry table with only one or two drawers in which to bestow the various articles needed. But the least pretentious little desk will hold all that is essential, if a discriminating judgment guides the selection.

Let us consider what this selection should include.

1. *Writing Paper.*

COLOR.

Business Letters.—For individual use in occasional business correspondence, white—neutral and non-committal—is the proper choice. Some business firms adopt a special color, which through long use comes to be recognized as a feature of their official correspondence.

Social Letters.—To paraphrase a familiar dictum, * When in doubt, choose *white*” the propriety of which is never questioned. It may be a pure white, a cream, or a bluish tint. For social correspondence, white is always accounted the most elegant; yet, some concession

is made to the instinctive "love of color." Delicate shades of blue and gray are much liked. More pronounced colors are included in fashionable stationery. But the use of these bright tints expresses the caprice of young people.

QUALITY AND FINISH.—The manufacture of writing papers has been brought to the verge of perfection. Even the low-priced papers boast a quality and finish hitherto unknown; while the finer grades are a delight to the pen of the writer and the eye of the reader. Two general styles are equal claimants to favor: the "fabrics," linen finished, and the "vellum," smooth and lusterless.

Every season brings some novelty. To keep well-informed as to the accepted styles—size and shape of paper, cut of envelopes, etc.—one should frequently visit the leading shops where are displayed all the latest fancies in *papeterie*.

Unruled paper should by all means be used. If the eye is not correct enough to keep a straight line across the page, the heavily-ruled leaflet may be slipped underneath until practice enables the writer to dispense with this guide.

WEIGHT.—Letter papers vary in weight, from the thick parchment or bond, used for very formal notes, to the onion skin or rice paper, preferred for foreign correspondence, or long personal letters whose multiplied sheets—if heavier—would crowd the envel-

ope and increase the postal charges. A medium weight is best for general use.

ENVELOPES.—These are provided to match all letter papers; and each should be used with the quality and size of paper for which it is designed. The folding of a sheet to fit its proper envelope is too obvious to require directions. For the medium weight and heavy papers, envelopes match exactly. For thin or translucent papers, envelopes similar in tint and finish, but denser in quality, are much to be preferred. These conservators of privacy should be opaque; an envelope through which the writing shows is not fulfilling its mission.

Stamped envelopes, to be had at the post-office, are used by many busy people for business correspondence and familiar everyday letters, to save the time spent in affixing stamps. These envelopes should not be used for formal correspondence.

2. *Ink.*

A good black ink is best for ordinary writing of transient importance. A standard writing fluid that grows darker with time, is preferable for correspondence that is to be filed for future reference. A bottle of carmine ink may be allowed a place on the desk. It will be found available in preparing business statements, and for other practical uses.

For social correspondence, black ink is used exclusively. But black inks—so-called—vary greatly; show-

ing jet, blue, green, and dark slate tones. When using tinted papers, the *tone* of the ink should be considered; as it is quite possible for an ill-chosen ink to destroy all artistic effect by introducing a color discord. Each tone is subtly effective when it harmonizes with the tint of the paper.

3. *Pens.*

Select a pen adapted to your individual handwriting. Never use a rusty or defective pen.

A gold pen exactly suited to one's hand is the most permanently satisfactory stylus. For those who prefer a steel pen, or a stub, there is an endless variety to choose from. But they are short-lived, and should be bought by the box and frequently replaced.

A pen-holder should not be too small. One having a diameter of one-third to one-half of an inch is less fatiguing to the hand than the delicate holders usually sold with ladies' pens.

4. *Postage Stamps.*

A supply of two-cent stamps should be in every writing-desk. They cost no more by the dozen than if bought one at a time at the stamp window and affixed in the presence of the government official at a thriftless expenditure of time and dignity.

It may be remarked, in passing, that a pair of small scales, for weighing letters and other packets to determine

the amount of postage required, may save many a tedious trip to the post-office.

5. *Wax and Seal.*

The use of a seal is always in good taste, though not indispensable. Its utility is in the fact that a sealed letter cannot readily be tampered with. As a thing of beauty a seal is desirable only in dainty correspondence. The wax should be tastefully chosen and neatly managed, and the seal should be personal in its significance. The coarse initials that can be bought at any stationery store and used by any and every one whose surname happens to begin with the same letter are neither distinctive nor elegant. Either a *fac simile* of the owner's hand, or an odd design known to his correspondents as his own personal seal, is acceptable to refined taste.

SEALING.—Wax tapers are much used in sealing; but practically, a gas burner turned low until only a blue flame as large as a pea remains, is the best torch for the purpose. Hold the end of the wax-stick an inch above this flame until it melts. Before it drips, quickly apply it to the flap of the envelope over the point of sealing, and leave thereon enough wax for the impress. Shape this portion of wax to the right size for the seal; then hold the envelope over the flame—not too near—long enough to remelt the partly-cooled wax; and when it is again molten, promptly lay the envelope on a flat

surface, and apply the seal, evenly and firmly, to the plastic wax.

CRESTS.—Not every Dunbar is heir to the fan-crest of the Earl of March; not every De Quincy has a direct claim to the wyvern of Winchester. The use of a seal displaying an ancient crest is in good taste only when a clear title is proven; and then, it is becoming only when the present generation sustains the dignity that belongs to an illustrious name. No social figure is more ridiculous than the insignificant claimant of a former title to greatness; and especially is this so when some shallow idea of a transplanted aristocracy goes with the claim. The *motif* of a crest—in American heraldry—must necessarily differ from that recognized in the old countries. There, the crest certifies to lineage that controls present rank and the legal disposition of valuable estates. Here, it is merely a gratifying memento of an honored ancestry, and bears the stirring motto, “Go thou and do likewise.” Those who show respect to their noble forefathers by emulating their good examples, and who endeavor to live up to their birthright, are surely entitled to sign their social compacts with their family crest, and to derive from the privilege all the satisfaction that it affords; with the cheerful congratulations of society at large.

ET CETERA.—There is still room in the little desk, and several things more are waiting to be stowed away: a cup containing a wet sponge to cleanse the pens; a pen-wiper of

chamois-skin ; blotters, large and small, including a pad of convenient size ; a beveled ruler ; a steel eraser ; well, add to these any trifles that may be suggested by your needs ; and when all are neatly put in readiness, see if you have not almost realized your ideal—in a well-appointed writing-desk.

What use will you make of this treasure ?

PART II

PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATIONS

PROLOGUE

in a crystal well lie the drops of ink,
And many a pen dips over the brink,
Plunges, then rises, its keen point wet
With a shining drop of liquid jet.
I wonder what story each one will tell;
For 'tis strange what varied meanings **may dwell**
All in a drop of ink.

The drop preferred by business men
Is a blue-green drop on a broad-nibbed pen;
Perhaps it may furnish a brief, deed, or writ
With "the said," and "aforesaid," "whereas," and
"to wit;"

Or, the credit and debit account it may keep,
And be in the book-keeper's confidence deep:
But whatever its record of business, 'tis clear
That nothing but commonplace fact will appear;
Though it chronicles many a care and annoy,
No heart-breaking sorrow nor deep-swelling joy
Shall be found in this drop of ink.

But other drops there are that flow
From Life's deep currents, now fast, now slow,
Now bright as the sunshine, now sombre as night,
Drops bitter with grieving, drops sweet with delight,
Some shine on the diamond-pointed gold pen,
And trace polite fictions again and again;
Their "regrets" are so joyful, their message, ~~to~~
sooth,
Must be read up-side down to get at the truth;
Some turn to green oxyds corroding the pen
Of the critic who lashes his fellow-men;
Some tell of sweet sympathy kind and sincere,
Others scorn, and deride, and slur, and sneer;
Some bring life-giving hope to the desperate soul,
Others crush out its life with their tidings of dole,
Which shall it be, O soul that guides
The hand that holds the pen that glides
Tracing on paper the thought that hides
In a single drop of ink?

In a crystal well lies a drop of ink;
I seize my pen—but stop and think:
What power in this little globule lies
To grieve the heart, or to gladden the eyes?

Pause, my soul, and linger yet ;
What wouldst thou do with this liquid jet ?
Search out thy motive, ponder it well :
The solemn truth I bid thee tell :
Is thy message one of love, or hate,
Of truth, or falsehood ? for soon or late
Thy written words shall come again
To bless or curse thy ready pen.
If loving-kindness move thy heart,
If noble impulse bid thee start,
If clear sincerity be thine—
Then write ; and show what power divine
May dwell in a drop of ink.

BUSINESS LETTERS

Business letters include all correspondence definitely bearing upon the writer's financial, official, or professional relations to other people.

The personal element in a business letter is distinctly selfish ; not necessarily in a bad sense, but in the sense that each man has his own individual task to accomplish, his own battle to fight. The intensely selfish motive that, in the nature of things, inspires a business correspondence may be made most aggressively and offensively apparent by the very effort made to conceal it. Artful unfolding of a business project, insinuating obsequiousness in approaching the intended victim, may put a correspondent on his guard against some trade robber. On the other hand, perfect candor in coming right to the point in stating a motive—selfish though it be—may immediately win confidence ; and if the writer has the

grace to choose words that incidentally show his legitimate self-interest to be nicely balanced with a due recognition of the rights of his correspondent, the success of his message is almost assured. Reading between the lines is not confined to sentimental literature. Some business letters give one a vivid impression that the thought in the writer's mind was, "I want to make as much out of you as I can, and at the smallest cost to myself." Others convey the agreeable spirit-message, "I'll do as much sometime for you." The actual facts of the transaction may be identical in the two cases; it is easy to predict which letter will receive a favorable reply. This subtle quality of tact is just as important in a commercial letter as in the most delicate diplomatic correspondence, as the experience of all successful business men will attest.

Point, brevity, and clearness are three requisites of a business letter.

Point is secured by carefully confining the message to the specific business.

Brevity is secured by stating the precise message in the fewest words.

Clearness includes simplicity and accuracy of expression. Grammatical errors, mortifying anywhere, are practically hazardous in a business letter. If a man does not say what he means, can he blame another for assuming that he means what he says? He may feel aggrieved at what he considers a most unfair misinter-

pretation of his position ; but if he will turn to **the copy** of his own letter he may find an ambiguous phrase, or a misplaced comma that will explain the "misinterpretation" that he has suffered at the hands of his correspondent.

Nowhere does a graceful English sentence appear to better advantage than in a business letter. It shows the writer to be a clear-headed man, his mental mechanism well-balanced, running swiftly and efficiently and without noise or friction. On the contrary, the abbreviated, breath-catching, elliptical phraseology, regarded by some people as the proper style to adopt in writing a business letter, suggests the hurry and disorder and breakage of clumsily-adjusted machinery. If the slighting of important words in this seven-league-boots method of **traversing** the subject really indicated an overwhelming pressure of business, it might now and then be pardoned ; but it indicates nothing of the sort to a discerning person, for busy people find it economy to be correct in the first place. One poorly written letter may require one or two subsequent letters to explain away its blunders. A firm, or an individual, whose time is worth anything cannot afford to be careless. That is a privilege reserved for the leisure class.

Legibility is of great importance in business letter writing. The growing popularity of the type-writer makes this all the more imperative, that those who still use the pen in their business correspondence may not

suffer by odious comparisons. People have learned how restful to their strained eyes are the neat pages that come from the typewriter, and they grow less and less inclined to bear patiently the infliction of illegible handwriting. Penscript must be clear and distinct to be tolerated. An "application" may be ignored because the recipient has not time to spend deciphering it—especially when in view of the pile of similar letters that await him, he decides that "there are enough without it, anyway." In this elbowing world the man who is too careless to do his best will find there are "enough without him."

Good stationery is indispensable to a neat letter. Trashy paper and pale ink spoil the effect of the best pen-work. Commercial or packet note, or letter (single sheets) may be used. The latter is preferred; the writing should be on one side only, and if more than one sheet is used they should be carefully paged.

Business letters should be answered the same day that they are received, unless the answer is delayed for a definite reason.

Copies of all important business letters should be kept until the matters to which they refer are settled. Even then it may be prudent to preserve them. A dead past sometimes walks in the form of a new and unforeseen litigation; and then old letters may have effectual power—to lay the ghost.

Letters of Inquiry.

The same respectful manner that marks a social letter should characterize a business letter of inquiry. Usually the answer, though strictly a matter of business, is yet somewhat of the nature of a personal favor.

1. (To a freight agent, inquiring rates, etc.)

WHITEHOUSE, NEW JERSEY,
March 19, 1889.

H. B. SANDERS,
Freight Agent,
FLEMINGTON, NEW JERSEY.

SIR:

Will you send me information on these points:

What are the rates of freight between Flemington, N. J., and Utica, New York, on boxed goods, and on household goods not boxed?

At what cost can a freight-car be chartered between the two points mentioned?

Is there a chance just now to secure part of a car direct to Utica?

Please answer by return mail, and oblige

Yours truly,

(MRS.) SARAH B. HUYLER

2. (To an experienced teacher and critic, asking advice in choosing a school.)

29 GROVE TERRACE,
WEST PHILADELPHIA, PA.

(Enclosing stamp).

October 6, 1889.

DEAR MADAM:

May I ask your advice in the choice of a school for my daughter Elsie? Our recent coming to this city will explain my ignorance of even the locations of desirable schools; and as to their relative merits I should not be able at once to judge. Your admirable *critique* on the "Prevailing Methods in Private Schools," which you read before the ——— Club one week ago, shows such a thorough enthusiasm in your subject as convinces me that you will cordially assist a perplexed mother in her efforts—may I quote your exact words?—"to place her daughter with an instructor who shall develop and educate her; not merely finish her—in more tragic senses than one."

Any confidential advice that you may kindly give me will be deeply appreciated by

Yours very sincerely,

GERTRUDE ALLISON DRAKE

MADAME C. V. MARTIN,

President of the ——— Club,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

3. (Inquiring as to the character and ability of a traveling salesman.)

— STREET,
NEW BRUNSWICK, N. J.,
June 25, 1890.

(Enclosing Stamp.)

MESSRS. FIELD & Co.,

— MARKET STREET,
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

GENTLEMEN :

Mr. R. P. Johns having applied to me for a position as traveling salesman in the furnishing goods business, refers me to you for testimonials as to character and ability. The young man is prepossessing in manner, and I might engage him at once; but as I make it a rule to investigate testimonials and references, I will ask you to give me your candid opinion of Mr. Johns' ability and reliability. I shall rest my decision largely upon your reply.

Respectfully yours,

P. D. CONWAY.

(Answer to P. D. Conway.)

— MARKET STREET,
PHILADELPHIA, PA.,
June 26, 1890.

MR. P. D. CONWAY,

— STREET,
NEW BRUNSWICK, N. J.

DEAR SIR:

Your letter of inquiry of the twenty-fifth instant is received

- . In reply we would say that personally we have the most cordial opinion of the gentleman to whom you refer. But he seems not to possess the qualifications for success on the road. While affable in manner he has not the aggressive force that alone can successfully battle against sharp competition ; and he lacks the personal magnetism that would make him popular and influential. His work for our house was conscientious and painstaking ; but, owing to the lack of results, we were finally obliged to dispense with his services. We regret that we cannot advise you to engage him in the capacity of a traveling salesman. If you have an office position vacant, we venture to suggest that you might find him a valuable assistant, as his methodical habits and his personal integrity are unquestioned.

Yours truly,

FIELD & Co.,
J. M. F.

-
4. (To a photographer, inquiring about charges for crayon work, etc.)

BETHLEHEM, Pa.,
July 18, 1890.

MESSRS. GILBERT & BACON,
820 ARCH STREET,
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

GENTLEMEN :

Please be kind enough to tell me what are your charges for crayon portraits—vignettes—of life-size

(exclusive of frame); also, whether you execute pastel portraits, and at what rates.

I wish to have a portrait copied from the photograph of my brother (Mr. C. M. Ryder), which was taken at your gallery last October, and which is numbered 185,612. Perhaps after examining the photograph, your artist can tell whether the crayon or the pastel would prove the more life-like and satisfactory portrait, and so advise me in the matter of choice.

Please address your reply as above.

Respectfully yours,

(MRS.) JESSIE R. CROLY.

5. (To an Editor, asking an opinion of the climate of Colorado.)

AIKEN, S. C.,

(Enclosing stamp.)

January 6, 1890.

DEAR MADAM :

My friend, Mrs. Lucy Mentor, has advised me to write to you for an opinion as to the advisability of my going to Colorado at this season of the year. I have been here since October, but find my health is not improving. Colorado has been suggested as the most hopeful resort for sufferers from pulmonary disease. Again, I am warned not to go at this season. The "multitude of my counsellors" bewilders my

judgment, especially since no one of them claims to speak with absolute authority.

Mrs. Mentor assures me that you have tested the merits of many noted resorts, and she thinks that, having but recently returned from Colorado, you will be able to tell me at once whether the change just now would be wise.

Mrs. Mentor's grateful references to your kind interest in her invalid brother makes me feel the more freedom in asking you to take this trouble for a stranger—whom ill-health compels to be also a wayfarer.

Trusting that I may hear from you soon, I am

Sincerely yours,

(MISS) CLARA W. VERNER.

MRS. KATE FARNHAM,

EDITOR OF THE HOUSEHOLD DEPARTMENT

— MAGAZINE,

NEW YORK CITY.

6. (To an Editor, inquiring about the authorship of a stanza.)

PETERSBURG, VA.

May 5, 1882.

TO THE EDITOR OF "NOTES AND QUERIES,"

NEW YORK BEACON.

DEAR SIR:

Can you tell me who is the author of the lines quoted below, and also, from which of his poems the stanza is

taken? Further, was it intended to refer to a real personage, or only to an ideal "bard"?

"Praise to the bard! his words are driven,
Like flower-seeds by the far winds sown
Where'er, beneath the sky of heaven,
The birds of fame have flown."

Please reply in "Notes and Queries," and address the response to "Alice;" and oblige

Yours truly,

ALICE D. HESS.

7. (To a Real Estate Agency, inquiring about an exchange of property.)

R—, NEW YORK,

June 1, 1890.

MESSRS. FISK & HALL,

PROVIDENCE, R. I.

GENTLEMEN:

I have a grass farm of one hundred and eighty acres, valued at one hundred and fifty dollars (\$150.00) per acre, situated about six miles from this village. I wish to exchange it either for city property in Providence, R. I., or for country property in the near vicinity of that city. My farm is in superior condition, and free from encumbrance; it has an undisputed title protected by a warranty deed.

Will you advise me as to the possibility of your effecting the exchange that I desire? Also, acquaint me

with your terms for transacting the business. In case you undertake to make the exchange, I will send you all needed information, maps, descriptions, etc.

Your prompt attention will be accounted a favor.

Yours truly,

WILLIAM B. CUMMINGS.

8. (To the Superintendent of a railroad, asking that a train be allowed to make another stop.)

ELMWOOD GROVE, ———

(Enclosing stamp).

October 10, 18—

J. D. ROSCOE, Esq.,

Supt. of the ——— Div. X. Y. Z. R. R.,

————— St.,

NEW YORK CITY.

DEAR SIR:

We, the undersigned, pupils of the Brierton High School, and residents of Elmwood Grove, would respectfully request that train No. 147, ——— Division of the X. Y. Z. Railroad, shall be stopped at Elmwood Grove for the benefit of ourselves and others who are at present greatly inconvenienced in getting to school, from the fact that the only available trains are No. 914, leaving Elmwood at 7.15 A. M., and No. 4, leaving Elmwood at 9.25 A. M.; thus involving either an inconveniently early start, or the equal disadvantage of being late at school. The stopping of No. 147, which passes Elmwood at 8.35 A. M., would prove a great accommodation to at least fifteen pupils of the Brierton School.

If our request comes within the bounds of the reasonable, we shall trust that your kind interest in the welfare of school-boys will lead you to grant it.

Very respectfully yours,

HENRY D. BAKER,
PHILIP S. CARY,
GEORGE W. STOWE.

(Answer to the above.)

Office of the Superintendent,

— Div. X. Y. Z. R. R.,

— — — — — St.,

NEW YORK CITY,

October 12, 18—.

MASTER HENRY D. BAKER, AND OTHERS,
Pupils of Brierton School.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS:

Your message of the tenth instant is received, and read with interest. I regret my inability to grant your precise request. No. 147 connecting at Price Junction with the west-bound "Limited," cannot be stopped at any station east of Brierton. But if it will be of any advantage to stop No. 64, which passes through Elmwood Grove at 8.10 A. M., it will afford me pleasure to see that it is done.

With best wishes, I am

Yours very truly,

J. D. ROSCOE,

Supt.

9. (To the Secretary of a society, requesting information.)

GRAFTON, W. VA.,

June 16, 1890.

(Enclosing stamp.)

COLONEL:

Will it be possible for you to furnish me with the roster of the Society of the Army of the Tennessee at the date of its organization? I have occasion to refer to the earlier days of this Society, in the course of an article which I am preparing to read before the People's Lyceum of this place; and I wish to verify some statements before accepting them as data.

Your kind assistance will be cordially appreciated by

Yours respectfully,

JOHN QUILL PENN.

COLONEL L. M. DAYTON,

Secretary of the Society of the Army of the Tennessee, Cincinnati, Ohio.

10. (Asking for the Catalogue of a University.)

THE ABERDEEN,

ST. PAUL, MINN.,

April 22, 1891

DEAR SIR:

May I ask you to send me, to the above address, the catalogue of the University, with any special circulars

that announce more particularly the courses of study to be pursued in the summer school for 1891?

Respectfully yours,

(MISS) FRANCES N. PUTNAM.

THOMAS CHROWDER CHAMBERLIN, PH.D., LL. D.

President of the University of Wisconsin.

MADISON, WISCONSIN.

Letters applying for situations. Answers to advertisements, etc.

An answer to an advertisement requires some judgment. While advertisers usually state explicitly what they want, yet it may sometimes be that some minor requirements might be varied, or something else of equal use be substituted.

For instance: The owner of a suburban residence wants a "handy" man about the place. He advertises for "a coachman and gardener, one who understands the care of horses, and who can take charge of a vegetable and fruit garden, bud and graft trees," etc. Now, Dennis Burk may not understand budding and grafting, and yet he may be perfectly competent to meet all the other requirements. In such case he may properly answer the advertisement, stating this exception—his inexperience in grafting and budding—and the employer may decide to take Dennis, and leave this extra and occasional service of grafting to be performed by a nur-

seryman specially employed. But, if taking "care of horses" is the thing which Dennis cannot do, it would be useless for him to answer that advertisement, even though he could do extremely well all else required. The "care of horses" being one of the essential requirements of the advertisement, cannot be "excepted" or substituted for, however full and extensive the other service may be.

To choose another illustration: A school Principal advertises for "A teacher of Mathematics and Mental Science; also, a teacher of English Literature, Elocution, Calisthenics, and Vocal Music." Now, Miss Alice Wise may have superior ability to meet the requirements of number two except in Vocal Music; but she may be able to substitute either Mental Science, or a part of the work in Mathematics. There is no impropriety in her writing to the Principal, as follows:

"MR. ———

"PRINCIPAL OF ——— SCHOOL.

"DEAR SIR:

"Allow me to answer your advertisement which appeared in this morning's 'Dispatch.'

"I am qualified to assume the duties of the second teacher for whom you advertise, with the exception of Vocal Music. But if, in the grouping of the studies, it is possible to make an exchange with some other member of the Faculty by which I could take Mental

LETTER WRITING

Science, or assist in Mathematics, in place of Vocal Music, I should be glad to offer my services," etc.

Since the grouping of branches, and the distribution of the same among the several members of the Faculty is an arbitrary matter (or, at least, depends on no fixed principle), it is probable that the Principal, if he is satisfied with Miss Wise's credentials, will very willingly re-arrange the groups of studies for the sake of securing so valuable a teacher as Miss Wise.

But if Miss Wise cannot teach the required branches, and is unable to suggest an exchange that will make an equally good grouping, she must conclude that it is useless for her to answer that advertisement.

Again: A lawyer in need of an office assistant advertises, "Wanted—a type-writer and stenographer; one who understands book-keeping," etc.

Two applicants respond. Number One proves to be a mechanical expert in all three of the phases of required work; but he is so ignorant of law, and so dull-witted in logic that he is liable to make the most absurd blunders in putting together the sections of a brief, thus requiring constant oversight and frequent correction. Number Two proves unequal to book-keeping; he is not so rapid a writer as his competitor; but he has an intelligent grasp of an idea, and is consequently unerring in his "copy," and, in spite of his not being so expert a "machine," he is by far the more reliable assistant of the two.

The result is that the lawyer finally employs, not the man who at first seemed to meet the very letter of his advertisement, but the one whose failure in one of the stated requirements is more than counterbalanced by his efficiency in other respects. And yet, Number Two would not have secured the situation if he had allowed himself to be discouraged by the last clause of the advertisement—"one who understands book-keeping." Confident of his ability to meet the leading demands he ventured to answer, stating what he could do ; thinking, no doubt, that "it can do no harm to try"—a hopeful motto that has cheered many an aspirant on to success.

The general rule in answering an advertisement is to answer the advertisement, exactly as it stands. "Wanted : a man to break stones on the road," should be answered by a man who just exactly wants to break stones on the road. None other need apply. But in complex cases, like those cited for examples, or in any case wherein the quality of the worker may prove as important a consideration as the quantity of his work, it is a nice point to discriminate between the essential and the incidental. Not to be able thus to discriminate, and to answer advertisements with intelligent suggestions may cost one the loss of a good opportunity when a little change in details might have resulted in a satisfactory contract between the parties.

To be sure there are advertisers who would consider such suggestions an impertinence, and perhaps dismiss

the applicant with the curt information that they "know what they want, and desire no advice." But the majority of experienced advertisers have learned that however well they "know what they want," they are often compelled to take what they can get; and, moreover, that in so doing they have occasionally stumbled upon some very desirable acquisitions in the way of "help." The applicant, too, must learn to adapt the kind and degree of his services to—not always what he would prefer to do—but what he can get to do. Mutual concession, mutual forbearance are demanded in correlating one man's talents and another man's needs—not alone in social life, but in business compacts as well.

EXAMPLES

NOTE.—In answering newspaper advertisements it is well to clip the advertisement and enclose the clipping in the letter, or paste it on the top margin at the beginning of the letter. This leaves no question as to the identity of the advertisement answered; and it saves many words of explanation in cases where the advertisement states many details.

1. (Answering an advertisement of a house to rent.)

(Advertisement pasted.)

(To rent, furnished, at Atlantic City, for February, March, and April, a cottage of seven rooms, near the

ocean-end of Kentucky Avenue. For terms and conditions, address L. 49, "Press" Office.)

189 North — St.
PHILADELPHIA, PA.,
January 28, 1890.

L. 49, "PRESS" OFFICE:

If the cottage referred to in the above advertisement is first-class in every respect, you will please send me further and definite information about it at once.

Respectfully,
F. D. TALLMAN.

2. (Answering an advertisement for apartments.)

(Advertisement pasted.)

(Wanted to rent, without board, unfurnished, within five minutes' walk of the City Hall, three rooms, suitable for parlor, bed-room, and library, on first or second floor. Private house in quiet neighborhood preferred. A liberal rent will be paid for the right place. Unexceptionable references given and required. Address, stating location, etc., G. 124, "Herald" Office).

119 N. ——— St.
July 8, 1890.

To G. 124, "HERALD" OFFICE:

In reply to the above advertisement I offer the following rooms:

On the first floor, a double parlor (folding doors), suitable for parlor and library.

On the second floor, front bed-room with bath-room adjoining; also, a large clothes-press.

Location, 119 N. ——— St., within half a mile of the City Hall.

The house is owned and occupied by myself and family (three persons). Three rooms are rented as lodgings to University students. No boarders. Neighborhood eminently respectable.

References: Judge E. B. Southey, of the Supreme Court; Mr. J. D. Trevalyan, teacher of Latin in Langdon Institute; Rev. Dr. Elmer, pastor of the Second Congregational Church. Equally good references will be expected from any one renting my rooms.

Price for the rooms, one hundred and seventy-five dollars (\$175.00) per month, including heating. Gas extra.

The rooms can be seen after 9 A. M. on Thursday, the tenth instant, or after 7 P. M. on Friday, the eleventh instant.

THOMAS A. CALDWELL.

3. (Answering advertisement for board.)

(Advertisement pasted.)

(One or two rooms wanted, with board, in a refined private family, for a lady and her daughter. Terms

moderate. Location must be within easy walking distance of the Conservatory of Music. References.

Address, Mrs. E. P. G., "Inquirer" Office.)

No. 23 W. — St.,

— —,

September 9, 1890.

MRS. E. P. G.,

"INQUIRER" OFFICE.

MADAM :

I have two rooms to rent, with board, and think that my location and surroundings would be what you are seeking in your advertisement in this morning's "Inquirer." My rooms are genteelly furnished, and my table is first-class. I have five boarders at present, among them Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Stacy (of the West Side Presbyterian Church). The social atmosphere of my house is all that a lady of refined taste could desire.

The price for the two rooms, with board for two, is eighteen dollars (\$18.00) per week ; for one room, with board for two, the price is fourteen dollars (\$14.00).

Call, or address,

MRS. REBECCA HAVEN,

No. 23 W. — St.

— —.

4. (Answering advertisement for a book-keeper.)635 JEFFERSON ST.,
_____,

April 6, 1891.

MESSRS. SMITH, BROWN & CO.,

NO. 85 WASHINGTON ST.,

GENTLEMEN:

In response to your advertisement in the "Dispatch" of this date, I respectfully offer my services in the capacity of book-keeper. I refer, by permission, to my recent employers, Messrs. J. D. Hatch & Company, of this city, with whom I have been for the past six years. Their retirement from business leaves me without a situation at present; hence this application.

Awaiting your decision, I am

Very respectfully yours,

RICHARD WHITE,

NO. 635 JEFFERSON ST.,
_____**5. (Answering an advertisement for a cook.)**

WAYNE, PA.,

May 14, 1890.

MRS. C. H. GRAY,

NO. 320 EUCLID AVENUE.

MADAM:

Seeing your advertisement for a good cook, I respect-

fully offer myself for the position. I make excellent bread, and understand cooking meats, fish, and all kinds of vegetables, and am experienced in preparing and serving a large variety of desserts.

Mrs. White, Mrs. Green, and Mrs. Black, three ladies on Euclid Avenue, for whom I have worked by the day, kindly allow me to refer you to them.

Very respectfully,

JANE POTTS.

6. (Answering an advertisement for a traveling salesman.)

(Advertisement pasted.)

(Wanted—a capable traveling man to represent our business. Must be well acquainted with the cheese trade especially. Address,

Jay & Howard, 59 Delaware St.)

No. 36 WEST BROWN ST.,

May 6, 1890.

MESSRS. JAY & HOWARD,

No. 59 DELAWARE ST.,

GENTLEMEN :

The above slip I clipped from the "Ledger" of this date. It meets my case exactly, and if you are not already suited when this reaches you, I should like to

have you give me a trial. I have had an extended experience with the cheese trade, and think I understand it as well as any man on the road. I formerly represented Strong & Mild, the largest cheese dealers in New York city, but I discontinued traveling on account of failing health. My health is now restored, and I am ready to return to a line of business which I thoroughly understand. No vacancy at present exists at Strong & Mild's, but they have given me their cordial permission to refer to them. Also, I am permitted to refer to Mr. Warner Moore, the Editor of the "Dairyman's Journal," and the proprietor of one of the largest cheese factories in New York State.

Hoping to make an engagement with your firm, I am

Respectfully yours,

EDWARD P. FAIRFAX.

8. (Applying for a position as traveling salesman.)

CONCORD, ———

(Enclosing stamp.)

October 6, 1890.

MESSRS. THURMAN & Co.,

184 MARKET ST.

GENTLEMEN :

Your former salesman, Mr. J. D. Hope, in whose store in Concord I have spent one year as clerk, has been kind enough to suggest that I should apply to you for a position as traveling salesman. I am anxious to gain the experience and the acquaintance with trade which a

year or two of traveling gives; and Mr. Hope assures me that he can cordially recommend me to you on trial. Of course I can claim no experience, but I am ready to do the best that I can, and use the common sense that is needed everywhere, at home, or "on the road." If you will give me a trial, at living wages, I will gladly undertake it for as low a figure as can reasonably be expected.

In case you think favorably of the idea, Mr. Hope will write to you, more particularly stating his judgment of my ability.

Very respectfully yours,

MARCUS D. CAREY.

8. (Applying for position as saleswoman in a store.)

———— MARTIN ST.,
ST. PAUL, MINN.,
April 23, 1891.

MESSRS. ELIOT & TRACY,
Retail Dry-Goods,
ST. PAUL, MINN.

GENTLEMEN :

Having recently come to St. Paul to reside, I am anxious to secure a position as saleswoman in a dry-goods store. Will you kindly tell me if there is any prospect that you will be able to give me employment? For a year past I have been employed at G—— &

Company's, in Chicago; at the glove counter for six months, and in the lace-goods department the rest of the time. I refer without hesitancy to Mr. Halberd, General Manager for G—— & Company, Chicago, Illinois.

Respectfully yours,

(MISS) ELLEN G. AMES.

9. (Teacher's application for a district-school.)

FARMINGTON, ——,

(Enclosing stamp.)

August 24, 1888.

MR. WILLIAM B. TRACEY,

Chairman of the Board of School Trustees,

FARMINGTON, ——.

DEAR SIR:

I understand that the "Oakland" School is without a teacher for the ensuing term; and I desire to apply for the position.

I graduated from the High School of Exeter, in the class of '87, and have taught one year in the Exeter Grammar School. The trustees of Exeter township have sent me a kind testimonial of my success in teaching last year, and I also have a letter of introduction from Professor H. D. Harmon, Principal of the High School. My references in Farmington are my uncle, Mr. David R. Hope; and Mrs. E. G. Phillips.

Respectfully yours,

(MISS) EMILY R. PORTER.

10. (Teacher's application for a High School position.)

CRANEVILLE, ——

(Enclosing stamp.)

November 11, 1890.

DR. R. P. CONOVER,

President of the Board of Education,

CRANEVILLE, ——.

DEAR SIR:

I understand that the resignation of Miss Frances B. Lang leaves the Junior Class of the High School without a teacher. I would respectfully apply for an appointment to fill the vacancy. My experience in teaching extends over a period of six years, during which time I have had charge of classes in the Grammar and High School departments in the Portland schools.

The enclosed letter is a copy of the testimonial presented to me by the Superintendent of Public Instruction at Portland, prior to my removal from that city to Craneville.

Very truly yours,

ANNA L. GOODWIN.

(Letter enclosed.)

PORTLAND, ——

June 18, 1890.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

With more than ordinary pleasure do I testify to the ability and scholarship of Miss Anna L. Goodwin, who

has for six years successfully instructed classes in our Portland schools. Her removal from this city is a matter of regret to all connected with the schools. I cordially recommend her to any one who may desire to secure a reliable and accomplished teacher.

JAMES G. LAWRENCE,
Supt. of Schools,
PORTLAND, ———

11. (To a Publisher of Subscription books, applying for an agency.)

M——, N. J.,
May 12, 1890.

THE EXCELSIOR PUBLISHING CO.,
—— St.,
NEW YORK CITY.

GENTLEMEN :

Will you please send me your circulars relative to "The People's Encyclopædia," stating your terms to agents. Also inform me whether the territory of G—— township in New Jersey is taken, as in case the field is open I wish to apply for the agency to canvass for your Encyclopædia in that locality.

Respectfully yours,
JOHN W. WALKER.

12. (Applying for position of Copyist in Title Company.)

No. 184 W. — St.,

L—, —.

(Enclosing stamp.)

February 6, 18—

MR. HENRY L. MORLEY,

President of the Title and Trust Co.,

L—, —.

SIR:

I would respectfully apply for a position in the office of your Company.

I have had some experience in the business and understand the requirements of the position, having been for six months employed at the Real Estate and Title Company of H—, to which Company I am permitted to refer.

In case of a vacancy in your office will you please consider me an applicant for the place? Mr. L. J. Bowers, and Mr. Philip S. Titus, stockholders of your Company, have assured me of their cordial endorsement.

Very respectfully yours,

(MISS) ELIZABETH M. IVEES.

13. (Stenographer and Type-writer; inexperienced.)

(Enclosing stamp.) NEWTON, CLAY Co., —,

May 7, 1890.

MESSRS. ROBERTS & SMITH,

Counselors-at-Law,

NEWTON, —.

GENTLEMEN:

I have just returned home after completing a course of five months at the School of Stenography and Type-writing in Extonville. I have mastered the theory, and I am now chiefly anxious to secure regular and systematic practice.

I am told that you have at times lately called in the aid of a stenographer and type-writer; and I have been advised to ask you if you could give me the opportunity that I need for practice, as assistant in your correspondence, etc. I would accept a merely nominal salary for six months for the sake of having the daily drill in the work.

My address is as above.

Respectfully yours,

FRANKLIN E. BELL.

14. (Stenographer and Type-writer ; experienced.)

EAST HAMPTON, —,

August 6, 1891.

MESSRS. RICE & Co.,

YONKERS, N. Y.

GENTLEMEN :

I beg to answer your advertisement for an experienced stenographer and type-writer, which appeared in the "News" and the "Times" of this morning's date.

I have had the requisite experience and success to warrant me in offering myself for the position. I pursued the course in stenography and type-writing at the College of Commerce, in Philadelphia; and since then have spent three years, exclusive of brief summer vacations, at my "Remington." The past year—for domestic reasons—I have been doing at home special work for different offices ; but I wish to resume work in September with one employer, and on stated salary.

In short-hand I have no difficulty in following the most rapid dictator, and my speed with the type-writer is above the average.

The salary which you offer is less than I should be willing to accept permanently, but I am willing to take a fair trial to prove my skill worthy of a better remuneration.

Yours truly,

(MISS) ISABEL G. CLARK.

Orders, Requests, Offers, etc.

An order is the briefest and most dispassionate of all business correspondence. Requests and offers are sometimes merely orders couched in more deferential phrasing. Again, in other cases they approach the idea of favors asked or conferred. The style should be more or less formal and brief according to the motive and spirit of the message.

EXAMPLES

1. (Ordering a state-room.)

NEWFIELD, NEW JERSEY,
November 15, 1890.

WM. P. CLYDE & Co.,
General Agents,
The Clyde Steamship Co.,
5 BOWLING GREEN, NEW YORK CITY.

GENTLEMEN :

Please reserve on the Steamship Iroquois, sailing for Jacksonville, Florida, on November 24, a lower berth in the most desirably located deck state-room that is available; and send the number to

MRS. L. J. SPENCER,
NEWFIELD,
NEW JERSEY.

2. (Ordering a sleeping-car section.)

SALEM, NEW JERSEY,
January 16, 1891.

Ticket Agent,
Pullman Car Co.,
BROAD STREET STATION,
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

DEAR SIR:

Please reserve a desirable section in the Pullman sleeper for Chicago, on the Fast Line (11.40 A. M.) on January 19, 1891; and hold the same for

JOHN D. LESTER,
SALEM,
NEW JERSEY.

3. (Ordering tickets for the opera.)

WOODBURY, NEW JERSEY,
April — 18—

Clerk of Box Office,
Chestnut Street Opera House,
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Please send me three tickets reserving seats in the first (or second) row, balcony centre, for Thursday evening, April — (Il Trovatore); for which you will find enclosed six dollars (\$6.00).

Address

GEORGE D. HESS,
WOODBURY,
NEW JERSEY.

4. (To Publishers, ordering books.)

SUNBURY, PA.,
February 17, 1891.

MESSRS. HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN & Co.,
BOSTON, MASS.

GENTLEMEN :

Please send to my address the following named books
from your catalogue of recent publications :

Over the Teacups (O. W. Holmes), \$1.50.

Strangers and Wayfarers (S. O. Jewett), \$1.25.

I enclose a postal note for two dollars and seventy-
five cents (\$2.75).

Very truly yours,

JOHN H. BROWN,
SUNBURY, PA.

5. (To a merchant, ordering dry-goods.)

LANGHORNE, PA.,
March, 18, 1890.

JOHN WANAMAKER,

THIRTEENTH AND MARKET STS.,
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Please send by express, C. O. D., the goods named in
the following list :

Twenty yards of shirting (York Mills).

One piece (55 yards) of best bleached sheeting

One piece (40 yards) of 6-4 sheeting.

One dozen linen towels, 5-4 length (as advertised at \$3.00 per dozen).

One pair of all-wool blankets (advertised at \$9.50).

One pair of scarlet wool blankets (advertised at \$3.75).

To be sent to the address,

MRS. J. D. ELLIOTT,
LANGHORNE,
PA.

6. (Order to a Grocer.)

——— St.,
PHILADELPHIA, PA.,
January —, 1890.

MITCHELL & FLETCHER,

TWELFTH AND CHESTNUT STS.

Please fill the following order, and deliver at —
——— St. before 3 P. M. to-day.

MRS. R. J. RESTIVE.

LIST:

- 1 lb. best Oolong Tea.
- 7 lbs. Granulated Sugar.
- 1 Pine-apple Cheese (large size).
- 3 cans French Peas.
- 2 boxes best Sardines.
- 1 two-lb. box Graham Wafers.

7. (Market order.)

R. J. McPHERSON,
MARKET, TENTH AND STATE STS.

ORDER :

Best Rib Roast (5 or 6 lbs).
Sirloin Steak (1½ lbs).
Two dozen Oysters (Blue Points).
Three heads of Lettuce.
½ peck of Tomatoes.
1 basket of Early Rose Potatoes.
4 quarts of Strawberries.

To be delivered at 116 West ——— St., by 12
o'clock noon.

By order of

MRS. RALPH PHILPOT.

8. (Order to a Florist.)

15 LEXINGTON TERRACE,

—————, —————,
March 26, 1891.

C. B. FLORIMEL,
29 GATES ST.

Please fill the following orders, to be delivered after
4 P. M., on Easter Even, March 28.

- (1.) One dozen *Perle de Jardin* Roses.
One dozen Bennett Roses.

One dozen Bride Roses.

Two dozen Lily of the Valley.

To be sent to Miss E. J. Pierpont, 29 Rayburn St.

(2.) One dozen White Hyacinths.

Ten dozen English Violets.

To be sent to Miss L. K. Stroud, 104 Lake St.

(3.) Two stalks Bermuda Lily (of not less than four blossoms each).

To be sent to the Misses Lockhart, 74 East Tremont Place.

Place in each box one of the enclosed cards.

The bill for the entire order to be charged to my account.

Respectfully yours,

MELVILLE TRACY.

9. (Order for a Carriage.)

THOMAS McNAMARA,

LIVERY STABLE, FIFTH AND RAND STS.

Mrs. J. D. Morehead desires a coupé, with a careful driver, sent to her door at 10 A. M. to-morrow; to be at her disposal for shopping until 1.30 P. M.

15 LORING PLACE,

Wednesday, January 14, 1891.

10. (To a Carpet-cleaning Works, ordering work to be done.)

816 ——— St.,

——— Pa.,

May 15, 1890.

EXCELSIOR STEAM CARPET CLEANING WORKS,

15 LAFAYETTE ST.

Please call at the above address for the several carpets mentioned below. I wish them to be thoroughly cleaned, and returned by the 18th instant, if possible.

If you cannot have them done by that date, will you at least guarantee their return by the twentieth? and oblige

EDWARD P. RITCHIE.

LIST: Carpets to be sent to the Excelsior Steam Carpet Cleaning Works.

1 Wilton (57 yards).

1 Body Brussels (64 yards).

1 Ingrain (47 yards).

1 Tapestry (38 yards).

1 Wilton Rug (4x2½ yards).

11. (To a Postmaster, requesting the forwarding of mail.)

194 COURT ST.,
RICHMOND, VA.,
June 6, 1890.

TO THE POSTMASTER,
RICHMOND, VA.

Please forward any letters that may come to the address of Miss Mabel J. Stephens, 194 Court St., Richmond, Va., as follows :

Until June 27, to *The Dennis*, Atlantic City, N. J.

After June 27, to Noyes' Beach, Rhode Island.

12. (To the Publishers of a magazine, announcing a change of address.)

PORTLAND, MAINE,
June 10, 18—.

THE CENTURY COMPANY,
UNION SQUARE,
NEW YORK CITY.

Please change the address of my *St. Nicholas* from No. 184 West Lyons Street, Portland, Maine, to No. 461 Jefferson Avenue, Detroit, Michigan ; and oblige

Yours truly,

JOHN C. HAYDEN.

13. (To Publishers, subscribing for a periodical.)

PEORIA, ILLINOIS,
December 15, 1890.

MESSRS. HARPER BROTHERS,
FRANKLIN SQUARE,
NEW YORK CITY.

GENTLEMEN:

I hereby renew my subscription to *Harper's Magazine* for the year 1891.

I also subscribe for *Harper's Weekly* for one year, beginning with January 1, 1891.

Enclosed please find a Money Order for eight dollars (\$8.00), the amount of the two subscriptions.

Respectfully yours,
(MRS.) JANE L. COMSTOCK.

14. (To an influential citizen, asking for a letter of introduction.)

_____, _____,
May 16, 18—.

HON. SAMUEL ROWE, SEN.,
_____ CORTLANDT ST.

DEAR SIR:

Will you grant a favor to the son of your former employee, John D. Rush? I propose to canvass your county to introduce a new patent reaper and binder. I am a stranger in that part of the State, and I should

be greatly obliged if you would give me a letter of introduction to some prominent farmer in the county, whose patronage and influence would be valuable to me at the outset. I am sure that a letter from you would give me the best possible introduction among the farmers of your district ; and if you will favor me thus, I shall greatly appreciate your kindness.

With respect, I am

Very truly yours,

JOHN D. RUSH, JR.

15. (To a housekeeper.)

THE TRAYMORE,

ATLANTIC CITY, N. J.,

July 10, 18—.

MRS. DUMONT :

My family unexpectedly have decided to return to Philadelphia on the 15th, to remain one week before going on to Lake George. Will you see that the house is opened and aired, and the sleeping rooms made comfortable for the time, and also notify Maria Duffy to be on hand in the kitchen. If Kate McVoy is not within reach, you can employ a chamber-maid of your own choosing, temporarily.

The hangings need not be put up, nor the furniture uncovered ; but let the rooms be made as cheerful as pos-

sible without disturbing the summer arrangements. Let all be in perfect order before we come, as I do not wish Mrs. Lester to be annoyed by any cares during her brief stop at home.

Yours truly,

STEPHEN C. LESTER.

16. (From a laundress to her employer. Sent by a messenger.)

45 JONES' COURT,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

MRS. JOHN LANGTON,

1414 ——— ST.

MADAM:

I am sorry to say that on account of the bad weather every day this week I have not been able to get your washing dried until to-day; and it will not be possible for me to do all of the ironing in time to send it home to-night. I will try to iron the tablecloths and napkins; and if you will send me word if there are any pieces that you particularly want to-day, I will try to do them also.

Respectfully,

SARAH JOHNSON.

17. (Offering furniture, etc., at private sale.)

— LEXINGTON AVE.,
NEW YORK CITY,
March 28, 1890.

MRS. M. W. REEVES-HARRISON,
— WEST — ST.,
NEW YORK CITY.

MADAM:

Owing to declining strength I am about giving up my first-class boarding-house, and shall sell at auction all of my household goods—including carpets, furniture, hangings, pictures, china, household utensils, etc.—that are not disposed of at private sale before the twenty-fifth of April.

Hearing that you are contemplating taking a larger house after May first, to meet the growing demands of the boarding department of your school, it occurs to me that you might like to secure some of my furnishing goods, most of which are practically as good as new. Of course, you would not be willing to buy at public auction; but my offer gives you the practical benefit of auction prices without the disadvantage of having your house appear to be furnished at second hand.

The piano, a Weber, cost five hundred and fifty dollars (\$550.00), but will be sold for three hundred dollars (\$300.00). A refrigerator of superior grade, suitable for your large establishment, will be sold for one-half

what it cost one year ago. Other things will be marked at proportionately low figures.

If you wish to avail yourself of this chance to secure desirable goods at a bargain, please let me know. The list for the public sale will be made out by April fifteenth; and any private sales contemplated must be effected before that date. You may call to examine the furniture, etc., any day between nine and eleven o'clock
A. M.

Very respectfully yours,
(MRS.) JEANNETTE C. ROBBINS

18. (To an acquaintance asking for a loan of money.)

SUMMIT, NEW JERSEY,
July 6, 1889

MR. JACOB TRUAX,
ORANGE, NEW JERSEY.

DEAR SIR:

You may have heard of the double misfortune that has befallen me. The destruction of my dwelling by fire was swiftly followed by an accident that left me with a broken leg. I am therefore temporarily homeless and disabled. It will be several weeks before I can reasonably hope to get back to work. Meanwhile I have debts and current expenses to meet, with very little cash in hand. Will you help me over the hard place by loaning me one hundred dollars (\$100) for three months?

I shall receive the amount of the insurance on my house within a week or so, and I shall return to my regular business as soon as I can walk once more.

John L. Sparks is willing to endorse for me; and in case you wish further security I am satisfied that Daniel Brown, also, would allow me the use of his name.

Very respectfully yours,

PETER L. HARMON.

19. (To a delinquent debtor.)

RAYMOND, ———,

April 10, 1889.

MR. CHARLES M. RICE,
JONESVILLE, ———.

DEAR SIR:

I have written to you twice recently in reference to the five hundred dollars (\$500) which I loaned to you on October 5, 1888, nearly six months ago.

You will recall the conditions under which that loan was made. I told you that I needed the money to carry on my own business, but consented to lend it on your promise to refund it in thirty days. I think I also said that in case you found it difficult to pay within that time, I would, at some inconvenience to myself, extend the time to sixty days. This was six months ago.

I need the money, and shall myself be compelled to borrow unless you remit the amount to me at once.

Please let me hear from you on your receipt of this. I have had no response to what I have heretofore written.

Respectfully,

ROBERT NOYES.

20. (From a debtor, explaining delay in payment.)

BRUNSWICK, MAINE,

July 7, 1889.

MR. D. E. ALLAN,

BAR HARBOR, MAINE.

DEAR SIR:

My note for one hundred and seventy-five dollars (\$175), payable to you, falls due on next Wednesday. Up to this morning I had fully expected to be able to pay it in full. But the failure of Quip & Company, who were to have paid to-day the balance on their recent purchase of my State Street store property, leaves me without any prospect of available funds this month. By the first of August matters will doubtless be adjusted; and I can assure you that one month's delay will be all that you will suffer through my present embarrassment.

Please advise me if you can permit the delay without inconvenience. If not, I will make an effort to borrow the money to pay the note. But if agreeable to you, I prefer to let the obligation rest as it now stands.

Sincerely yours,

PAUL M. KLINE.

21. (To a negligent agent, having charge of a rented house.)

95 WESTERN AVENUE,
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY.

MR. B. C. DAVIS, Agent,
184 CLARK ST.

SIR:

The hot-water pipe in the bath-room at 95 Western Avenue is leaking badly this morning, and requires prompt attention. The faucets, also, all over the house, are more or less out of order, as I think I told you last Friday, when I paid the rent for the quarter; and if I remember correctly, you promised to see to it at once. I shall be at home all day. Please send a plumber without delay.

Respectfully,

(MRS.) JULIA R. FIELD.

Thursday, April —, 18—.

22. (To the same.)

95 WESTERN AVENUE,
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY.

MR. B. C. DAVIS, Agent,
184 CLARK ST.

SIR:

It is four days since I sent you a message about some necessary repairs to pipes, etc., in this house; and no

response has been made. We have expressed our willingness to wait until the first of May for the re-papering of the parlors; but a matter so important as the repair of leaking pipes cannot be delayed without serious disadvantage to the house as well as to the tenant.

I trust that I may not be compelled to remind you of this again.

Respectfully,

(MRS.) JULIA R. FIELD.

Monday, April —, 18—.

23. (To the same.)

95 WESTERN AVENUE,
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY.

MR. B. C. DAVIS, Agent,
184 CLARK ST.

SIR:

Your continued neglect of so plain an obligation as the decent repair of a house, rented at a rate that should guarantee a perfect condition of the premises, has convinced me that it is useless for me henceforth to rely upon your agreements; and I therefore relinquish the premises 95 Western Avenue from date. The keys will be sent to you by a messenger this afternoon.

(MRS.) JULIA R. FIELD.

Friday, April —, 18—.

24. (To the Chief of Police, entering a complaint.)

294 WEST LAKE ST.,

_____, _____,
July 16, 18—.

TO THE CHIEF OF POLICE,

_____, _____.

SIR :

It becomes necessary for me to call your attention to a phase of annoyance and danger to which we have been subjected for some time past, and without any efficient effort on the part of the police to meet the case. I refer to the firing at random of small pistols in the hands of small boys, usually in alley-ways and back-yards, to the detriment of property and the imperilling of life. This is a matter of frequent occurrence. Twice within two weeks have tiny bullets come singing into my sitting-room window—the last one, yesterday, shivering a pane of glass and coming within six inches of my face as it fell to the floor.

When the first case occurred I notified the policeman on this beat ; but he was not able to identify the boy who carried the pistol, and there the investigation ceased.

But I consider it time for a more vigorous campaign in the interests of personal safety ; and to this end I refer the matter to you. I shall not consider my sitting-room a safe resort for the family until some decided measures are taken to suppress the toy pistol.

Respectfully,

(MRS.) CATHERINE G. MINOR.

95. (To the Gas-Light Company—upon leaving a rented house.)

95 WESTERN AVENUE,
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY,
April —, 18—

THE TRENTON GAS-LIGHT CO.,
— — — — — St.

I shall vacate the house No. 95 Western Avenue, tomorrow. Will you inspect the meter, and present the gas-bill to date.

Respectfully,
(MRS.) JULIA R. FIELD.

26. (To a Gas-Light Company, complaining of the meter.)

19 COLBY ST.,
CLAYTON, —, —,
March 7, 18—.

THE CLAYTON GAS-LIGHT COMPANY,
FIFTH AND DEAN STS.

The meter on these premises is surely defective. In no other way can I account for the astonishing variation in the registration of gas consumed from month to month; especially since the largest bill presented this quarter is that for the month of July, when the absence of the family for two weeks, and the consequent closing of the house for that time, should have resulted in a diminished expense for gas. I have had occasion to make a similar complaint once before.

I shall defer paying any more bills estimated by this meter until it has been inspected and its mistakes rectified.

Very respectfully,
JOHN D. COULTER.

27. (To a teacher of Elocution, applying for lessons.)

49 SPENCER AVENUE,

March 18, 18—.

DEAR SIR:

Can you give me a few private lessons on "Hervé Riel"? I am preparing this selection for the High School contest in declamation, and I should be glad to profit by your able criticisms.

I could take the lessons any afternoon at four o'clock or any evening, except Wednesday, after seven o'clock.

Respectfully yours,

CHARLES E. HUNTER.

PROFESSOR D. GARRICK JONES,

——— Institute.

28. (To a teacher of Elocution, asking for lessons.)

JACKSONVILLE, ILLINOIS,

February —, 1891.

MADAM:

Having been for several years an enthusiastic student

of literature and elocution, I am desirous now to advance still further in the science and the art of expression under a preceptor so gifted and accomplished as yourself. If you can find time to admit another pupil from your ever-crowded list of applicants, may I be that one?

It would be my wish to devote my whole time to the study and the practice; and I would leave it to you to decide what number of lessons per week I could undertake with advantage.

Your circulars having given full information as to your terms, I would simply say that the financial side of the question is perfectly satisfactory to me.

Will you kindly inform me whether you can give me the lessons? I would rather not go to Chicago until I know that no disappointment awaits my cherished plans.

Believe me with great respect

Sincerely yours,

GRACE DEL SARTO

MRS. FANNY KEMBLE-SMITH,

The Auditorium,

CHICAGO,

ILLINOIS.

29. (To a literary critic, submitting a manuscript for correction.)

LEXINGTON CORNERS,

———, N. Y.

September 4, 1889.

PROFESSOR JAMES L. SPEAR, PH. D.,

Literary Department,

——— Conservatory.

R——, N. Y.

DEAR SIR:

I have just completed an essay on the subject, "Immigration; its Advantages and its Perils," which I wish to send to the "——— Review" for publication; but desiring it to be absolutely correct in language and style before it goes to an exacting editor, I write to ask the privilege of sending the manuscript to you for careful criticism and revision.

If you will accept the task, I will cheerfully pay whatever fee you may name as the just price of such labor.

Respectfully yours,

JOHN QUILL PENN

30. (To an Editor, offering an article for publication.)

STILLWATER, MINNESOTA,

June 16, 1889.

TO THE EDITOR,

"Pioneer Press,"

ST. PAUL, MINN.

DEAR SIR:

I send herewith an article entitled, "June Rambles through the Lake States," which I offer for publication in the weekly edition of the "Pioneer Press."

The article was written up from the notes of a journal kept while the writer was making precisely that kind of a "June ramble;" and I trust that it is sufficiently true to life and "local color" to commend it to your Literary Editor.

If the contribution is acceptable, will you kindly notify me?

If you are in the habit of paying for articles of this character, your regular rates for the same will be acceptable.

Respectfully yours,

RUTH RAMBLER.

31. (From a Lyceum Committee, engaging a lecturer.)

LAURELDALE COURT HOUSE,

—— Co., ——.

January 6, 1889.

REV. K. P. LIVINGSTONE, D. D., LL. D.,

ALBANY, NEW YORK.

DEAR SIR:

On behalf of the Society for Ethical Culture, in this town, we have the honor to address you, with the request that you will at an early date deliver before our Society your admirable and popular lecture on "Robert Burns."

In the event of your acceptance, we are prepared to pay our regular lecture fee of fifty dollars (\$50.00).

It would harmonize with our standing appointments to assign one or another of the following dates for the lecture: January 17, February 4, or February 27; but if none of these dates is compatible with your other engagements, we will endeavor to accept any date that you may choose between now and the first of March.

Very respectfully yours,

JOHN L. RICE,	}	<i>Committee.</i>
W. D. SPOONER,		
ELIAS M. FARNHAM,		

Letters of Recommendation.

A letter of recommendation rests its value on two essential conditions:

First: The writer must be a person of character and standing, whose opinion can be relied upon as authoritative; and who is in a position to know whereof he speaks, and thus judge correctly the merits of the person whom he recommends.

Second: His letter must be stamped with the impartial candor of a judicial mind. However cordial his commendations may be, it must never appear that the desire to further a friend's interests supersedes his sense of what is due to the third party—and, perhaps most important of all, due to himself; for in no way can a man so quickly destroy his own reputation for sound judgment as by giving indiscriminate letters of recommendation. It is going quite beyond the requirements of the golden rule to build up another's claim to credit at the expense of one's own. Kind-hearted people often do themselves this incalculable injury rather than refuse a request of this nature. A dread of the embarrassment of refusing is the lash under which many an unwilling "testimonial" is written. Unfortunately, the one whose self-respecting dignity is not equal to this crucial test will soon have frittered away what little capital he ever possessed in the way of public confidence in his critical ability. It may sometimes require tact to refuse without

personal unkindness; but if a man has made his opinions really valuable by habitually endorsing only that which is intrinsically meritorious, he is not likely to be besieged by triflers. Superficial or dishonest people know instinctively that they would gain nothing by applying to him; they will turn their hopeful faces to some more "generous" person—well so-styled, in that his ready praises are entirely a gratuity.

1. (Recommending a cook.)

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

The bearer of this, Eliza Snow, has been employed by me for over a year; and I can unhesitatingly recommend her as a capable cook and a reliable woman. During the time that she has been with me it has never happened that any meal was behind time or poorly served; and I have never yet gone into the kitchen when it was not in a clean and orderly condition. Her chief ability is in cooking meats, vegetables, and various kinds of bread. I have usually attended to the desserts myself, from choice; but Eliza has shown sufficient knowledge of this department also to satisfy me that she would be competent to take entire charge of the cooking if it were desired. I have found her invaluable, and part with her now only because I am about to

close my house and depart on an extended Western tour.

MRS. FERDINAND J. ELLIOTT.

14 DE LAND PLACE,

May 15, 1890.

2. (Recommending a laundress.)

THE SUMMIT HOUSE,

August 1, 1890.

TO THE GUESTS OF THE SUMMIT HOUSE, AND
OTHERS :

I have been a guest of this house for eight successive summers; and during the months of my sojourn here each year my laundry work has been given into the care of Dinah Sinclair. In all this time I have not lost a single garment through carelessness or rough usage at the laundry. I am perfectly satisfied with her work, and consider her charges reasonable; and I recommend her to any of the guests of the house, or others, who may be looking for a reliable laundress.

MRS. EDMUND G. STERLING.

3. (Recommending a woman for general housework.)

I take pleasure in recommending Esther Janney as a capable woman for general housework. While in my employ her duties were chiefly those of cook and laun-

dress, myself and daughters attending to the other housework for our family of seven. But in a smaller household I have no doubt that Esther would be perfectly able to do all the work. An invalid lady desiring exemption from the task of overseeing her house would find Esther an excellent care-taker.

MRS. JOHN D. SPENCER.

95 STEVENS ST.,
June 7, 1890.

4. (Recommending a dress-maker.)

94 CORTLAND ST.,

March 11, 1890.

TO THE LADIES OF NEWTON AND VICINITY :

Miss Janet Sparks has been for one year employed at my dress-making parlors in this city, and has been thoroughly instructed in the art of the cutting, fitting, and draping of gowns, according to the most approved systems of London, Paris, and New York. She has shown remarkable natural talent for her work, and an artistic taste that makes her especially successful in adapting styles and colors to different forms and complexions.

As she is about to locate in Newton to open business for herself, I cordially introduce her to your favorable notice, and grant her the privilege of referring to me at

all times when it may further her success in reaching desirable patronage.

MADAME J. E. MONTFORD-MARTEL,
Proprietor of the
Emporium of Fashions,

5. (Recommending a bookkeeper.)

— BROADWAY, N. Y.,
December 15, 1890.

Mr. Franklin B. Story has been one of the bookkeepers employed by this establishment as assistant during our busy season. We have no vacancy at present that would make it possible for us to offer him a permanent position with us, but we can give him our heartiest recommendation to any house having such a vacancy to fill. Mr. Story has but recently graduated from the ——— Business College, and his practical work thus far has been desultory, being mainly such as we ourselves have given him; but he has manifested the qualities that distinguish a good accountant, and his recent work, under Mr. J. R. Dawes, our expert, has been an excellent test of his acumen. We therefore bespeak for him a hearty recognition among our brother merchants and bankers.

REMINGTON & YATES,
Wholesale Dry-Goods.

6. (Testimonial to a music-teacher.)

— CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC,

_____, _____,
June 10, 1890.

It affords me pleasure to add to the diploma of the Conservatory my personal testimonial to the genius and accomplishment of Miss Alida J. Cummings, whose recent graduation from this institution was marked by such brilliant success as a concert pianist.

It is Miss Cummings' intention to teach the piano-forte. I am happy to say that her method is perfectly correct, her technique second to none; while her sympathy with her pupils, and her power to inspire them with enthusiasm in their study of music will make her a rarely valuable and successful teacher.

I predict for her a brilliant future, not the least lustre of which will be the loyal and constant appreciation of those who are so fortunate as to become her pupils.

CARL FITZENMEYER,
Supt. of Musical Department,
_____ Conservatory.

7. (To manufacturers, recommending a "sweeper,")

TO THE MANUFACTURERS OF
THE _____ PATENT SWEEPER,

GENTLEMEN:

I have used your Patent Sweeper for three years, and can recommend it as possessing all the advantages which

you claim for it. Since I bought the sweeper, my carpets have rarely been swept with a common broom—except that a stiff whisk broom was used in narrow and inaccessible corners—and I never have had cleaner carpets, less dust, and fewer moths than during these three years. I would not attempt to keep house without securing a — Patent Sweeper among the first of my household utensils.

Respectfully,

(MRS.) CELIA GOLDING.

8. (Recommending a coachman and gardener.)

— GRAMERCY PARK,
NEW YORK,

April 15, 1890.

MR. JOHN B. LAWTON,

— BROADWAY.

DEAR SIR:

The sale of my country-seat on Long Island—which I have suddenly determined upon—will throw out of employment my excellent coachman and gardener, Thomas O'Brien. I am desirous of securing him another equally good situation, and I therefore recommend him to you. He is strictly sober and steady, and though middle-aged, is hearty and strong. He understands the care of horses, and is an excellent vegetable gardener, and able to take all ordinary care of the lawn and

shrubbery. (The conservatory and flower beds are in charge of a neighboring florist.)

If you need a coachman at your place in Orange you cannot do better than to employ Thomas O'Brien; or, in case you do not need him yourself, you will confer a favor by mentioning him to any of your acquaintances who are in need of a competent man.

Very truly yours,

BENJAMIN P. TRUITT.

9. (Recommending an office-boy.)

49 RAYMOND ST.,

June 24, 1890.

MESSRS. WARE & WISE,
Attorneys-at-law,
16 COMMERCE ST.

GENTLEMEN:

The bearer of this, Rufus B. Jennings, is anxious to secure a place in your office as errand-boy and to make himself useful during the summer vacation. He has been a pupil of mine during the past year, in the Fifth Grade, in the Lincoln School, and his rank in lessons has been excellent, and his deportment as good as can be demanded of a live boy of eleven years. Though full of life, he is obedient and sensible in his ideas of duty, and

I think you would find him a trustworthy boy in your office.

Respectfully,

AMY G. STEBBINS.

10. (General recommendation of business canvasser.)

— SPRUCE ST.,
NEW YORK CITY,
November 11, 1890.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

When I first began introducing the ——— Printing Press throughout the New England States, I employed as one of my traveling representatives Mr. Elisha B. Gray, of Hartford, whose signal success is attested by the fact that over two hundred of our presses are now in use within the bounds of the territory which he canvassed in New Hampshire and Maine during that year. I am satisfied that he can be relied upon to make a success of anything that he undertakes. As he is a practical machinist, he is especially well prepared to represent any business involving an understanding of machinery, agricultural implements and appliances, etc. I recommend him as a shrewd business man, and one who has the nerve to hold his own among competitors.

HENRY D. SLOCUM,

General Agent for

——— Printing Presses,
NEW YORK CITY

SOCIAL LETTERS

The essential difference between a social letter and a business letter is in the nature of their respective motives. In a business letter the direct object of the writer is to give or to seek information concerning some material facts of a practical nature. In a social letter the real purpose is to express a courteous regard, or to secure a stronger hold upon the good-will, respect, or friendship of some other person. In the social letter the moral sentiments take precedence; material facts are incidental; whereas, in a business letter the moral element is incidental, the business element the salient feature. If a letter is useful first of all to express the social disposition of the writer, and to win from the correspondent a response in kind, the letter may be properly called a social letter, even though business is to some extent associated with it. Some examples of informal letters, given later, may illustrate this. There business is connected with a message that is essentially an expression of the moral sentiments. As a matter of fact, all the truly enthusiastic enterprises of the world, all the practical events that make history sublime, have been of the nature of business tinged with moral sentiment, or moral grandeur exemplified in practical deeds. So, while business letters and social letters are recognized as dis-

distinct classes, both contain the elements of the moral and the material, the difference being in the preponderance of one or the other quality.

Social letters may therefore be said to include all correspondence in which the practical affairs introduced are made subservient to the moral purpose. They will be considered under two divisions: the conventional, or Formal, and the spontaneous, or Informal.

FORMAL LETTERS

Formal correspondence includes all messages that are worded according to some established conventional usage. The formal style may indicate the slight acquaintance of the parties, or it may be chosen to set the bounds of distance which for any reason it is desirable to maintain. Always respectful, negatively friendly, positively discreet,—these are three good qualities that make the formal style of social correspondence one of the conservators of social harmony.

While conventional forms, like the social conditions of which they are the exponent, are substantially fixed, the details of style are subject to the caprice of fashion. Any one having occasion to use the more elaborate forms of invitations or announcements may learn from any reliable stationer what is the latest approved usage.

The tone of reserve that marks conventional cor-

respondence is sustained largely by the use of the third person in the phrasing of the message. The sentences composing a formal message should illustrate the crowning quality of literary style, terseness.

SOME EXAMPLES OF CONVENTIONAL FORMS.

Wedding Invitations.

1. (A church wedding, followed by a reception at the home of the bride.)

MR. & MRS. PHILO B. STEVENS
REQUEST YOUR PRESENCE
AT THE MARRIAGE OF THEIR DAUGHTER,
CYNTHIA MINERVA,
TO
MR. CHARLES FRANKLIN MARTEL,
ON WEDNESDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER THE TWELFTH,
AT SEVEN O'CLOCK.
ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH,
BRIERTON, NEW JERSEY.
1890.

Enclosing this card.

RECEPTION

WEDNESDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER THE TWELFTH,
FROM HALF-PAST SEVEN UNTIL NINE O'CLOCK,
184 RIVER ROAD.

If it is desirable to avoid a crowd of curious sight-seers at the church, ushers' cards are also enclosed :

PLEASE PRESENT THIS CARD
AT THE CHURCH.

2. (A home wedding, where a limited number are invited, and no distinctions made.)

MR. & MRS. PHILO B. STEVENS
REQUEST THE PLEASURE OF YOUR COMPANY
AT THE MARRIAGE OF THEIR DAUGHTER,
CYNTHIA MINERVA,
TO
MR. CHARLES FRANKLIN MARTEL,
ON WEDNESDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER THE TWELFTH,
AT SEVEN O'CLOCK.

RECEPTION
FROM HALF-PAST SEVEN UNTIL NINE O'CLOCK.
184 RIVER ROAD,
BRIERTON, NEW JERSEY.
1890.

Receptions.

Official.

(Presidential Reception.)

The President of the United States requests the company of Mr. Theodore Sterling at the Reception in honor

of His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales, on Tuesday evening, January the nineteenth, at nine o'clock.

Executive Mansion.

Semi-official.

The Governor and Mrs. Parker
request the honor of your presence
on Thursday evening, September
eleventh, from eight to ten
o'clock.

Executive Mansion.

Social.

1. Colonel and Mrs. Charles Hope
will be pleased to receive you
on Thursday evening, December
eighteenth, at eight o'clock,
To meet
General and Mrs. John D. Ellison.

An early reply is
requested.

4 Willow Terrace,
Baltimore.

2. (Note or card form.)

Mr. and Mrs. John L. Porter
At Home.

Wednesday evening,
May thirtieth,
8 o'clock

"The Leasowes,"
Richfield Park.
R. S. V. P.

3. (Card form.)

Mrs. Eleanor Forsythe Dacie,
Miss Isabel Farnham Dacie.

Thursdays,
3 to 5 P. M.

49 Lake St.

Miscellaneous.

1. (Invitation to Dinner.)

The Cinque-foil Club
request the honor of Mr. Percy
Shafton's company at dinner, on
Wednesday, December seventeenth,
at seven o'clock.

Hotel Brunswick,
New York.

Mr. William Hunter requests
the pleasure of Mr. Henry Baker's company
at dinner, on Tuesday evening, March
eleventh, at six o'clock.

Mr. Hunter hopes also to entertain
Mr. Robert Baillie, of Glasgow, Scotland.

Hotel Ponce de Leon,
St. Augustine, Fla

Colonel and Mrs Charles Hope
request the pleasure of Mr. and
Mrs. Samuel B. Clay's company
at dinner, on Wednesday, December
seventeenth, at seven o'clock.

In honor of
General and Mrs. John D. Ellison.

4 Willow Terrace,
Baltimore.

(An invitation to dinner must always be answered at
once.)

2. (Invitation to a fancy-dress ball.)

Mr. and Mrs. Alfred B. Conover,
Mr. and Mrs. David E. Frohman,
Mr. and Mrs. George H. Irving,

request the pleasure of your
company, on Tuesday evening,
February the fourteenth, at nine
o'clock.

Albemarle House.

R. S. V. P.

Costume de riguer

3. (Party invitation.)

Mr. and Mrs. Philip Lawrence

At Home,

Tuesday evening, March twenty-fifth,
from eight to half-past eleven.

For

Miss Bessie Stryker,

Miss Isabel Holland.

184 Roscommon St.,

Music from 9 to 10.

4. (Birthday party.)

Mr. and Mrs. Philo B. Stevens
will be happy to see you at
their home, on Monday evening.

May twelfth, at eight o'clock.

To celebrate the twenty-first
birthday of

Mr. Philo B. Stevens, Jr.

Dancing.

R. S. V. P.

184 River Road,

Brierton, N. J.

5. (Invitation to a Tea.)

Mr. and Mrs. Lester G. Sharp
At Home
on Wednesday evening, January
fifteenth.

Tea 85 Leland Avenue,
8 to 10. Brierton.

6. (Banquet Invitation.)

The St. Paul Bar Association
requests the honor
of your presence at the
Exercises and Banquet
upon the opening of the
New Court House
at St. Paul, Minnesota,
May 6, 1887

7. (Tendering the privileges of a club.)

The Officers and Members of
the Mercantile Club
tender to
Mr. James Transient
the privileges of the
Club Rooms.

for the period of two weeks from date,
at the request of Mr. John Permanent.

ABEL MANN,
Secretary.

St. Louis, April 3, 1889.

DELIVERY OF FORMAL MESSAGES.

Heavy white note paper and cards of the finest quality should be used for formal invitations. The note, or card, should be enclosed in a square envelope to match. On this envelope is written the name only of the person or persons to whom the invitation is sent, as :

Mr. and Mrs. Samuel B. Clay.

or

Mr. Ralph Seagraves.

The note thus addressed should be encased in another envelope, of plainer quality, on which the name and address are written.

It was formerly considered imperative that notes sent to people in the same town should be delivered by a private messenger ; but this is no longer an inflexible rule. Postal facilities are so prompt and orderly that a message suffers neither delay nor injury by going through the mails ; and while those who still prefer to send by a messenger can do so, it is no breach of propriety to entrust the missives to the mail.

Formal Acceptances, Regrets, etc.

The tone of a formal note is the keynote for the style of the answer. The same elegant precision that marked the utterance of the original voice should characterize the echo.

Prompt answers, either accepting or expressing regret at being unable to accept, should be sent in response to dinner invitations, or on any other occasion where the number of guests is known to be limited, or whenever the note of invitation contains a special request for a reply; at other times the acceptance is inferred from silence. Requests for a reply are made either by a brief sentence, as, "The favor of a reply is desired;" "An early reply is requested;" "Please reply," etc., or by the use of the abbreviation, "R. S. V. P." for the French phrase, "*Respondez s'il vous plaît*" (answer, if it please you). The latter is a phrase of established usage; but the plain English is often to be preferred, for its unmistakable clearness of meaning.

Regrets are sent when an invited guest is by any cause prevented from accepting an invitation or keeping an engagement. It is ungracious to "decline" an invitation, as though your absence were a matter of deliberate choice. Be entirely at the mercy of circumstances, a helpless victim of detentions—never a voluntary ab-

sentee. Not that I would counsel insincerity. In most cases a legitimate cause of detention does exist; and even in the occasional instance when a decided aversion to going is the only excuse, it may, probably, be referred to health, since an unsocial mood is often the sign of some physical disturbance. A form that I have used with great comfort of soul and peace of mind in such cases is this: "—— regrets that a serious indisposition prevents her from accepting Mrs. Bore's kind invitation," etc. It was literally true; whether it was also literally "a story," I leave it to the individual conscience to decide. But be that as it may, on general principles we should regret any conditions that interfere with the harmonious exchange of social courtesies. When the reason for detention can be stated, it gives an air of candor to the message of regret; but when this cannot be done without awkwardness, the message can usually be expressed with perfect sincerity in general terms.

An invitation, like any other proffered courtesy, should, as a rule, be accepted. To treat it with indifference or neglect is churlish. A graceful "acceptance" is always the highest expression of courtesy; a graceful "regret," when necessary, is the highest exponent of intelligent skill.

On strictly formal occasions it is as awkward to send unnecessary answers, as it is rude to omit to send necessary ones.

EXAMPLES

1. (Reply to an invitation to dinner. Acceptance.)

Mr. and Mrs. Samuel B. Clay accept with pleasure Colonel and Mrs. Charles Hope's invitation to dinner, for Wednesday, the seventeenth instant.

Riverside Park,
December 8.

2. (Regret. Party invitation.)

Mr. Ralph Seagraves regrets that, owing to an important engagement in Boston, for the same date, he is unable to accept Mrs. Banning's kind invitation for Tuesday evening, the twelfth instant.

95 Dorian Street,
Monday, August 4.

3. (Acceptance. Dinner invitation.)

Mr. Henry Baker is happy to accept Mr. William Hunter's invitation to dinner, on Tuesday next.

Mr. Baker highly appreciates the opportunity of meeting Mr. Robert Baillie under such agreeable auspices.

Hotel Ponce de Leon,
Monday, March 7.

4. (Regret. Private reception.)

Mr. and Mrs. Jerrold Harleigh express their regret that, owing to illness in their family, it will not be possible for them to accept Mr. and Mrs. John L. Porter's invitation for the thirtieth instant.

85 Carmel Street,
May 21.

5. (Regret. Birthday party.)

Miss Evelyn Ryder begs to express her regret that other and imperative engagements will prevent her from being present in response to Mr. and Mrs. Philo B. Stevens' kind invitation for Monday evening, the twelfth instant.

Miss Ryder offers her hearty congratulations to Mr. Philo B. Stevens, Jr.

Lindenwood Seminary,
May sixth.

INFORMAL LETTERS

The framework of a formal letter is on the outside; in the informal letter, sentiment, like an ivy, covers the trellis; making us oblivious of its exact conformation. Precise directions as to style would antagonize the idea of spontaneity; an over anxiety about the precise wording destroys the essential spirit of the message. The thought should come clothed in its appropriate phrase. But some things must be remembered. Informality does not mean carelessness. As in familiar conversation, so in the familiar letter some freedom may be allowed in the way of elisions, and popular or idiomatic expressions that are not strictly elegant in stately address or dignified announcements; but no grammatical blunders or rhetorical confusions are excusable. The ideal spontaneous letter does not parade its structure, any more than the master musician parades his technique; but it is there, or there would be no ideal letter, no master musician.

The phrasing of a spontaneous letter, like the ready speech of an extempore orator, is not the miracle of a sudden and unheralded out-burst of inspiration; but the instantaneous calling into active use of a store of long-

gathering materials and forces. The best informal or spontaneous letters are those to the making of which have gone many hours of practice, of language drill, of common-sense reflection. Not for the purpose of writing that particular letter; with no idea that such a letter was ever to be written, the very facility that is now demanded—and ready—has been acquired, often by a course of discipline that would never have seemed to have any bearing on such a final purpose. In short, an impromptu message is not so impromptu as it seems.

But let none be discouraged. Those whose earlier attempts to write in the easy conversational style are painfully self-conscious affectations may acquire the grace of spontaneous expression if they will take honest pains to cultivate their talents. To the credit of human nature be it said that there is a native antagonism between insincerity and spontaneity. It is easy to lie in formal phrase; but to utter falsehood in the manner of impulsive avowal is nearly impossible, or, when effected without stammering, is the height (or the depth) of artifice. On the other hand, the fundamental secret of ready expression is sincerity. Add to this the unselfishness that eliminates self-consciousness, the politeness that is “kindness delicately expressed;” and with a conscientious regard for social duty acting as a motive influence, do the best you can to send your honest message home to the heart of your correspondent.

EXAMPLES OF INFORMAL LETTERS.

"Be keeping up an interchange of favors,
Like good men in the truth of their behaviors."

JOHN KEATS.

Requests and Offers.

To a clergyman, offering a contribution to church funds.

89 GRANDVIEW AVENUE,

—, —,

March 19, 1890.

REV. SAMUEL FAITHFULL, D.D.,

PASTOR OF THE ——— CHURCH.

DEAR SIR:

Your recent appeals from the pulpit have not been altogether unheeded by me, although my slow response may have seemed to argue indifference. The claims of the Missionary Society of our church have never been so clear to me as since I have listened thoughtfully to your course of lectures on "The Spirit of Evangelistic Work." Heretofore I have contributed annually such an amount as I happened to be in the mood to give, or as much as some more than usually eloquent—or tiresome—agent of the Society could persuade, or drive, me to subscribe. But once the yearly allowance was paid over, I have dismissed all thought of it, as one among many things that were "done for a while, at least." I frankly admit that no vital interest in the missionary work, home or foreign, or even comprehension of its actual nature, has ever been a factor of my giving. All

this seems strange to me now, in the light of my awakened interest.

It affords me pleasure—for the first time in my life, it affords me pleasure—to say that I will be one of the one hundred for whom the Society are asking, to pledge one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00), to be paid in one year if the full number of one hundred subscribers can be made up by that time.

Further, I personally pledge myself to you, to stand by you to the extent of my reasonable ability in bringing up the annual missionary fund of our church and congregation to the two thousand dollar limit which you have named as a possible and easily reached mark. I trust that many others will respond in similar strain, and that your earnest “line upon line, and precept upon precept” may meet with a hearty response from an equally earnest people.

Sincerely yours,

LEMUEL COUPON BOND.

(Requesting a lady to chaperone a young girl.)

198 ——— St.,
COLUMBUS, OHIO,
January 6, 1890.

MY DEAR MRS. SHERMAN:

What would you do if you were so busy that to leave town was an impossibility, yet, in your few leisure mo-

ments, you were besieged by an importunate daughter begging papa 'to take her to Old Point Comfort for two or three weeks'?

I fancy that you would do just as I am now about to do; namely, ask some kind friend to help you out of the dilemma. Can you, and will you, ask George and Eloise to spare you for a few weeks, while you go with my Florence to Old Point? I really think you would find the trip delightful at this season; and it will be a wonderful relief to me if you will consent for awhile to be burdened with the care of this lively bit of a girl, who is getting to be pretty much of a problem for her staid and plodding papa. Florence will be delighted to have you for a traveling companion, and I need not add that I shall feel absolutely at rest about her safety and happiness under your chaperonage.

Ample funds for the trip will be placed at your disposal, and the details of the journey will be at your discretion. Will you kindly mention the date on which it would be agreeable to you to start? Also, would it not be well for you to come to us this week, to complete preparations, and start from here? You see, I speak as though it were settled. May I hope that no engagements exist to prevent you from accepting the responsibility? Perhaps I should not have the assurance to ask this, if I did not know that your life-long affection for the dearly-beloved mother of my Florence has always

made you cordially ready to give your motherly thought and care to the now motherless little girl.

Most sincerely yours,

HENRY D. SYLVESTER.

MRS. FRANCES B. SHERMAN,
CINCINNATI.

(Offering to care for a sick person.)

MONDAY MORNING,

June 23.

MISS ALLISON :

Can I be of service to you in any way? I will come and assist in the care of Kathleen at any time of the day or night—whenever my coming will be of the greatest advantage to you. Also, please let me help you in the arrangements for her comfort, in the way of preparing nourishment, or seeing that her clothing is always in readiness. There are so many details in the care of the sick that only those who have been through the experience can understand. While I do not wish to be intrusive, I shall be glad to fill any vacant niche, whatever it may be. I hope that you trust me so implicitly that you will not hesitate to take me at my word.

Faithfully yours,

EDITH SOMERVILLE.

MISS MARTHA ALLISON.

(Asking for influence in securing an appointment.)

ROCKVILLE, ———,
August 19, 1890.

MR. HOPEWELL:

As you doubtless know, the settlement of father's estate leaves mother with a very meagre income; and I now realize the necessity of seeking some employment in order that I may not be an idle burden on her hands. I have thought of making an effort to secure a position in the office of the Land Title and Trust Company, of Griertown. I am told that the duties are such as any fairly well-educated girl can easily learn to perform. I am not prepared to teach, and I have no marked skill with the needle; but I write a good hand, and have already done some copying for Messrs. Rye & Beach that was entirely satisfactory.

There are so many applicants for every position that I have little hope of securing an appointment unless some one high in authority or influence would second my efforts. As you are a heavy stockholder in the Land Title and Trust Company, may I ask your advice about seeking employment there? In the event of my making such an application, could you recommend me for the place? If you would be so kind as to do this, I should feel quite sanguine of success. I trust that in asking this I am not trespassing too far upon the kindness of my father's life-long friend.

Kindly address your reply to Rockville, ——. Mother and Charlie and I are staying here at the old homestead for the month of August, keeping house for Grandfather Baillie while grandmother is absent on a visit to Cousin Ellis Rhodes in Providence. After September first we shall be at home in Griertown once more, to remain through the winter.

Mother joins me in kindest regards to Mrs. Hopewell and yourself.

With respect, I am

Very truly yours,

LUCY D. SOMERS.

MR. GEORGE W. HOPEWELL,
GRIERTOWN.

(Offering the use of a battery.)

Tuesday morning.

16 MERIDEN STREET,
CLIFTON, ——.

DEAR CLARA:

Your brother Frank tells me that your physician has prescribed the use of electricity in the treatment of your numb arm and hand; and that you are obliged to delay beginning the treatment until you can send to Philadelphia for the apparatus.

Now, I have a perfect little gem of a battery standing

idle, and there is no reason why you should not have it at once ; so I beg leave to send it now by Frank.

The manner of "charging," arranging the poles, etc., is fully described in the printed directions ; and I have also given Frank a practical lesson in the management of it, so that I think you will have no trouble with it. I hope that the treatment may prove entirely successful. I shall come over in a day or so to see how you look when "electrified."

Yours devotedly,

LOUISE CONNERS.

MISS CLARA ALLYN.

(Offering the use of a carriage.)

49 ST. JAMES PLACE,

CLIFTON, ———,

December 9, 1890.

MY DEAR MISS CONNERS :

When I met you and your energetic colleague, Miss Allyn, out on your round of "calls," which I could but surmise were in the interest of the forthcoming church fair, my conscience began a series of severe smittings, the burden of which was a reflection on the comparative uselessness of man. Why is it that you ladies must wear out life and energy "raising" the church debt, while we able-bodied drones do nothing? except to buy your fabulously-priced jim-cracks at the bazaar.

with a meek and uncomplaining submissiveness born of our lurking sense of the way we have shirked all the hard work leading up to this festal occasion. Well, my numerous lugubrious and self-depreciatory reflections may not interest you ; but the practical outcome of it is this ; may I, as a sort of sedative to my conscience (no merit in it, you see !), offer you my carriage, any or every day while your preparations are in progress, for the use of your committee on their tiresome journeyings here and there on the multitudinous errands out of which shall soon beevolved that miracle of feminine ingenuity—the “Bazaar of all Nations.”

I would humbly offer myself also, if at any time such a worthless fellow can be utilized—as a stepladder climber or errand-runner, or in any other way that woman’s inhumanity to man can devise. You would do well to accept my offer and set me to work at once while my mood is tender ; I may be hardened by to-morrow, in which case I shall not do any more for the cause than my usual share in the way of purchasing twenty-dollar pincushions. If you would encourage the remorse that leads to reformation, lose no time in commanding

Yours faithfully,

JOHN LEE BENEDICT.

MISS LOUISE CONNERS.

(To a clergyman, asking the loan of the manuscript of a sermon.)

189 CARTWRIGHT STREET,

November 19, 1890.

DEAR MR. PHILPOT:

As you doubtless know, Mrs. Gertrude Coleman has been unable to leave the house for weeks, since the severe spraining of her ankle. It was a matter of regret to her that this misfortune detained her from church on the day when you occupied our pulpit, especially when she learned that your theme on that occasion was one on which she has spent much troubled thought.

I gave her as clear an outline as my limited genius for "reporting" admits; but I fear that I made very imperfect work of it. Would you be willing to loan me the manuscript of that sermon, for a day, in order that I may read it to Mrs. Coleman? I am sure that it would be a very great pleasure to her, and no less an advantage to me to fix in mind many thoughts that in a single hearing are not always fully grasped and retained.

Your kind consent to this request will be deeply appreciated by

Your sincere friend,

MARY D. SPENSER.

REV. J. R. PHILPOT, D. D.

(Asking for provisions for a church "supper.")

85 LAKE STREET,

GREENWOOD, —,

November 15.

MY DEAR ETHEL:

If my face is half so expressive as you are wont to tell me that it is, I am sure I should not need to say a word if you were here. You would see my "one idea" shadowed forth in my very eye-lashes, to the exclusion of every other thought. "Chicken salad" is the burden of my appeal! You know the Guild "Supper" is to be given on Thursday and Friday evenings of next week, and I am one of the committee on supplies. In asking my friends for contributions I have been guided by what I know of their especial skill. It is an open secret that you have a perfect genius for the compounding of chicken salad. Can you promise me a bowl for Thursday evening, all for the good of the cause? If so, you will win the gratitude of all the troubled Marthas of St. Andrew's Church. Please send an answer by the bearer of this and oblige

Your friend,

ALICE J. MITCHELL.

MRS. THEO. D. MONROE,

95 Western Avenue.

(Offering to take care of children while their mother takes a trip to the seashore.)

FRIDAY MORNING, — 28th.

MRS. STORY :

I have been thinking to-day of our conversation last Wednesday, when May and Louie and I were at your house. You spoke, quite incidentally, of the invitation that you had received to go to the seashore for two weeks in March, with your Aunt Truman ; and you dismissed it as an impossible thing, because you could not leave the children.

Now, why cannot you "leave the children" with me for that time? I grant that I may not be the wisest guardian in the world, but I could probably be entrusted with the care of even such a lively pair as your John and Fred for that brief time. They can go to school just as usual, and in all respects be under the same regulations as though you were here. If you can be persuaded to arrange it so, I shall be very glad, for I know that the sea-air will be the best possible thing for you just now. Do not hesitate to assent, for I assure you that it will be a real pleasure to me to help remove any obstacle that stands in the way of your little trip; and, moreover, I shall be very glad of the company of your bright and interesting boys.

Truly your friend,

SARAH J. MORRELL.

MRS. WILLIAM K. STORY.

(Offering hospitality to "delegates.")

40 WEST FIFTH ST.,
STOCKTON, ———,
May 26, 1890.

MR. RIVERS:

We shall be happy to keep "open house" during the three days next week when the State Sunday-School Convention is meeting in our city. We have one large guest-room which we will place at your disposal for lodging, and we can entertain at meals any number not exceeding eight at any one time.

While Mr. Myers and I will very cordially welcome any delegate who may be consigned to our hospitable care, it would afford us especial pleasure to receive the Rev. Dr. Kendall and Mrs. Kendall, of Lawtonville—if they have not already accepted invitations from other friends whose claim upon them is stronger than ours.

Very truly yours,

ELLEN GATES MYERS.

MR. C. P. RIVERS,

Chairman of Hospitality Committee,
State Sunday-School Convention.

Letters of Inquiry, Apology, and Explanation.

Social letters of inquiry, apology, and explanation should usually be brief and to the point, but without any suggestion of haste or curtness. On the contrary,

they admit of much incidental expression of friendliness—a graceful sentence or two of this character being always in place in even the most urgent and business-like of social letters.

The tone may be grave or gay, according to the theme and the occasion.

(Apology for not keeping an appointment.)

3900 — STREET,
WEST PHILADELPHIA,
Wednesday, 1—15—'90.

MY DEAR ELSE:

When I promised you that I would be at home at twelve o'clock noon, to-day, I forgot to add that in case any detention kept me out beyond that hour I wished you by all means to await my return. Then, I neglected to tell the housekeeper that you were coming; so that when you arrived, she did not know enough to treat you otherwise than as a transient caller. The result was that when I came home—fifteen minutes late—I found that you had been here, had simply been told that I was out, and had gone away again.

It is all due to my own negligence, for which I am soundly punished; for it has cost me the loss of your promised company at lunch.

I hope this will reach you before you leave town; and, if possible, do come yet, before you go. If I were

sure of finding you, I would go myself instead of sending this note; but I do not know where to locate you to-day, except at Mr. Allison's, where I know you are to dine this evening, and whither I shall dispatch this at once.

I do hope you will excuse my stupidity, and show your forgiveness by coming as soon as you can.

Most regretfully yours,

JULIA SAYRES.

MISS ELSE LEIGH ROTH.

(Apology for a child's misconduct.)

THURSDAY, — A. M.

MRS. LYONS:

I am deeply chagrined to find that my Arthur has been giving you such serious annoyance during my brief absence from home. He was expressly charged to be careful about playing ball anywhere near the windows; and if not definitely forbidden to "bounce" his ball against the side of the house, he should have clearly understood that, from the general caution.

I have told him that he must apologize to you, not merely for breaking your window, but more especially for the rudeness of trespassing on his neighbor's premises. He is very much ashamed of it now that he sees it in the light of a breach of good manners, and not merely in the light of a few dollars' worth of material damage.

The window will be replaced at once ; and I trust you will not regret the annoyance so much, if it results, as I hope it may, in a wholesome and lasting lesson to my thoughtless boy.

Respectfully yours,

KATHERINE M. LONG.

MRS. C. P. LYONS.

(Apology for wrong done in anger.)

THURSDAY, P. M.

DEAR HAL:

The echo of my own taunting words sounds a sorrowful refrain in the silence of my calmer after-thoughts. I was bitterly angry this morning when I thought you were in some way to blame for my failure to receive that coveted nomination. I did not stop to see how unlikely it was that you could have been actively responsible for my defeat ; that you were personally friendly in your greeting to my rival was all that I could grasp ; and with all the jealous rage that sprang up in my heart, I hastened to heap upon you the reproaches that I now know were undeserved ; indeed, which all the time I felt were at least unjust in their extravagance.

Can you forgive my rude and unfair conduct, and accept my heartfelt apology ? You know me of old ; this is not the first time that you have had to be forbearing toward my faults. I sometimes think that I might

better never again expect you to be patient. But, "O Brutus! have you not love enough to bear with me when that rash temper which my mother gave me makes me forgetful?"

Shall I ever conquer this—my besetting sin? Continue to help me—if you can—by your constant patience and noble example.

Your repentant friend,

PERCY STILLWELL.

MR. HENRY L. GRAVES.

(Notes concerning an accidental exchange of umbrellas.)

The known characteristics of the person addressed decide the tone and manner of the address. What would be accepted in good part by one might be an affront to another. The jocose manner is not safe in addressing people who are lacking in a "sense of humor."

1.

THE ALBION,

ST. PAUL,

Thursday, May 21.

MR. RECKLESS:

Does "personal property" include umbrellas? If so, somebody must be this moment bewailing the loss of

such a piece of property, which same is reposing, with the stolid unconsciousness of inorganic matter, in the stand by our hat-rack, where you left it. But, alas! mine is not there. Could it be, that, weary of its long imprisonment in the majolica jar, my umbrella has prevailed on your umbrella to change places with it for a day, that the one might have an airing while the other secured a much-needed rest? Far be it from me to blame *you* for the exchange; it is doubtless a deep-laid scheme on the part of the umbrellas themselves.

Nor should I have much cause for complaint, if the comparative worth of the two were to be considered; since yours—which I now possess—is a much larger, newer, and showier (as to the handle) umbrella than mine—which you now possess. Still, as I object to large, new, showy umbrellas, and greatly prefer little, old, plain ones, may I beg you to do yourself the favor to re-exchange them when next you cross our threshold, and thus set at rest the mind of

Yours concernedly,

SOPHIE LESCOMB.

P. S.—It may happen to be a clear day when next you call; but never mind—bring the umbrella. To be obliged to carry it under a clear sky may serve as a wholesome discipline to—the umbrella.

S. L.

2.

THE ALBION,
ST. PAUL,
May 21.

MR. SERIOUS:

Just after you left our house last evening, I discovered that your handsome umbrella was left in the rack; and the fact that my old one was gone led me at once to conclude that in the dim light of the hall you had taken the wrong one. Fearing that you might not be able to recall where, in the course of a busy day, you had made the exchange, I hasten to tell you, and to assure you that your property is safe, and awaits your convenience in calling or sending for it.

Very truly yours,

SOPHIE LESCOMB.

3.

THE ALBION,
ST. PAUL,
Thursday, May 22.

MR. SENSITIVE:

Did you know that you left your handsome new umbrella in our rack last evening? I suppose you have been puzzled to think where you could have left it; for I know one never can recall such an incidental matter as the whereabouts of an umbrella. However, it is safe, and will be taken care of until you find it in your way to call, or to send for it.

Sincerely yours,

SOPHIE LESCOMB.

(Apology for overlooking a shopping commission.)

BRIERTON, —,

March 6, 1890.

DEAR MARGARET:

When you open the package which will probably come from Lord & Taylor's this evening, you will be surprised and disappointed not to find the soutache braid to match the brown cloth. I did not know that I had overlooked anything, until, on taking out of my bag the various samples, memoranda, etc., I came upon the sample that I should have used in matching the braid, but which, having been too carefully stowed away in one of the inner pockets, had been forgotten. I am so sorry, for I fear it may delay your work. With your permission, I will commission my brother Robert to stop at Lord & Taylor's to-morrow. I am sure he can get the braid just as well as I could; and then you will have it by six o'clock to-morrow evening. This is the swiftest remedy that I can apply for the trouble that my oversight may occasion; and I hope the twenty-four hours' waiting may not seriously interfere with your dressmaker's plans.

With regrets, I am

Sincerely yours,

CLARA J. MYERS.

MISS MARGARET TOWNE,

19 E. Tenth St.

(Requesting an opportunity to explain.)

141 GROVE STREET,

April 10, 1896.

MISS ROLLINS:

When I left you yesterday it was with the uncomfortable feeling that we were not quite fairly represented to each other by the few sentences that we had exchanged. At least I know that I failed to express justly the thought in my own mind; and I also believe that the impression which I derived from your words was an equally inaccurate inference of your real feeling and opinion. I cannot think that you would be so bitter and uncharitable as your words would imply; nor am I content to rest under the imputation of being so narrow-minded and arbitrary as I now see that my hasty remarks might justify you in thinking me to be.

May I have the privilege of again talking with you on this subject? Then we may both have a better chance to express our real opinions, with greater calmness and charity of spirit than either of us could boast yesterday.

Believe me, I do not wish to discuss the matter in a controversial spirit; but I do earnestly wish that, however diverse our views may be, we may preserve, through all our differences of opinion, a well-founded respect for each other's judgment, and an undiminished measure of mutual friendship.

Sincerely yours,

HOWARD CAMPBELL.

MISS LUCIE ROLLINS.

Letters of Introduction.

(Direct and Indirect.)

A social letter of introduction, strictly so-called, is as courtly as a formal note, and as terse as a business introduction. Such is the proper form when such a letter is to be used on a special occasion, or at a definite time, or for a special purpose. Usually, though social in its scope, it is more or less allied to business or professional affairs, or to club and society affiliations.

But social introductions, even by letter, are not always so formal or so direct. Sometimes the way to a subsequent meeting of two people is paved by a letter to each from a friend of both, commending each to the other's acquaintance, whenever they may happen to meet; on the strength of which the two, when circumstances throw them together, start at once upon the footing of old acquaintances, because of their mutual interest in the common friend of both. Though very informal and very indirect, such letters are essentially letters of introduction; and often they are much more graceful and agreeable to all concerned than the more precise and dignified direct style. Like every other extreme of informality, they are appropriate only among intimate friends, and in introducing people who are sure to be congenial. The direct letter of introduction should be written whenever the lack of formality might result in awkward misapprehensions; and whenever there is the

least doubt about the cordiality with which the introduction will be received, the strictly formal style should be chosen.

(Personal letter of introduction.)

TORRESDALE COLLEGE,

_____, _____,
May 26, 1891.

MY DEAR DOCTOR:

Permit me to introduce my friend, Mr. Eliot Chapman, of Boston, and to express the hope that you will extend to him the same cordial greeting that you have always given to

Your friend,

ROBERT TRUE HART

JOHN B. RICHMOND, M. D.,

186 — STREET,

DETROIT, MICHIGAN.

(Superscription for the above.)

JOHN B. RICHMOND, M. D.,

186 — STREET,

Introducing

DETROIT,

MR. ELIOT CHAPMAN,

MICHIGAN.

BOSTON, MASS.

(Asking for a letter of introduction.)

(Enclosing stamp.)

NO. 161 — STREET,
LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY,
August 20, 1890.

PROFESSOR MAX SEIBERT,
—— COLLEGE,
——, ——.

DEAR SIR:

Your constant interest in my progress while I was a special student in your department of —— College, emboldens me to ask of you the favor of a letter of introduction to Professor Heinrich Keller, of the Ancient Classical Department of —— University, which I hope to enter in September, if my examinations are satisfactory to the Faculty of that august institution.

I go there an entire stranger. I know that no personal influence would help me through, without merit; and I also know that you, of all teachers, would be the last one to encourage anything like evasion of the strict requirements of entrance examinations. It is not from either of these motives that I ask the favor of your letter, but because I shall be happier in my new field of study if one who has hitherto been my faithful guide bespeaks for me, his unworthy pupil, a cheerful welcome from my new preceptor.

Am I presumptuous when I think that, remembering your past kindness, I am not asking too much?

With deep respect, I am

Gratefully yours,

PAUL M. TALBOT.

(Introducing a comrade of the G. A. R.)

WHEATFIELD, NORTH DAKOTA,

April 8, 1890.

COLONEL:

Comrade Henry B. Sterling, of Post No. 9, of Wheatfield, is about to visit Philadelphia on a trip of mingled business and pleasure. While there he will take especial delight in attending the anniversary exercises of Post No. —, of which you and I were charter members.

It affords me pleasure to introduce Sterling to you personally; and I feel sure that you will be more than usually glad to meet him when I tell you that he was one of the brave Company G., — New Jersey Volunteers, who were fighting side by side with our Company at Antietam, at the moment when you, then our Captain, were struck by that vicious minie ball. You remember, you were carried to the rear by two of your own men and one of the New Jersey boys, the latter none other than Comrade Sterling. His enthusiastic recollection of your brave fight and gallant leadership has been the theme of more than one spirited talk since

our meeting—after the chances and changes of war—in the peaceful surroundings of a Grain Elevator Company's office, where I officiate as treasurer, with Comrade Sterling as head bookkeeper. By the way, let me suggest that Comrade Sterling is a capital off-hand speaker.

I only wish that I, too, could be present at the anniversary of Post No. —, so largely composed of members of our old regiment; but since I cannot go, will you extend a double measure of welcome to Comrade Sterling?—for the sake of one of your own absent "boys," who, with deep respect, subscribes himself,

Yours in F., C., and L.,

WALTER D. TEN BROEK.

COLONEL JOHN P. HARRIOT,

Late in Command of the

— Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteers.

(To a Bishop, requesting the privilege of introducing him to friends in another city.)

GREENPOINT, —, —,

November 6, 1890.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR:

Knowing that you are to attend the Church Congress in Philadelphia next week, I would express the earnest wish that while there you will make the acquaintance of my sister, Mrs. James P. Rogers, and family. I have written to Mrs. Rogers that you are coming, and she

hopes to be so fortunate as to have you for her guest during the week of the Congress. She has already epoken to Dr. ———, of the Hospitality Committee, begging him not to allow any other hostess to appropriate you. Mr. Rogers, who is one of the Lay Vice-Presidents, is taking most enthusiastic interest in the plans for the Congress. Their home, at No. ——— Walnut Street, is centrally located; and I can assure you that a most cordial welcome awaits you there. Mr. Preston and I, when visiting our Philadelphia friends, have often spoken of “our Bishop;” so you will find that you are almost as well known to the members of Mr. Rogers’ household as to our own family at home.

Trusting that you may have a prosperous journey, and a very happy time in Philadelphia, I am

Ever, with deep respect,

Cordially yours,

ESTHER D. P. PRESTON.

THE RIGHT REVEREND PAUL BARNABAS,

Bishop of ———.

Informal Invitations.

Informal invitations are always allowable between intimate friends, the formality or informality not being decided by the nature of the occasion, but by the intimacy of friendship and association.

(Invitation to a church "social.")

E. WALNUT LANE,

GERMANTOWN,

October 11, 1890.

MRS. LESCOMB:

Our church "Society for Christian Work" will meet in the church-parlors on Wednesday afternoon, the twenty-second instant, at three o'clock. I shall be most happy to have you accompany me on that occasion. As it is the regular quarterly meeting, reports will be presented from the committees who have had charge of our various branches of work for the quarter just past.

I trust that you may become so much interested that you will decide to join our Society, and give us the benefit of your counsel and assistance. Now that you have become a member of our congregation, we hope to welcome you as a friend and colleague also. It will afford me pleasure to introduce you to several ladies who have expressed a wish to meet you. If agreeable to you, I will call for you at quarter before three, on Wednesday.

Very truly yours,

ANNETTE REA LE ROY.

MRS. RICHARD T. LESCOMB.

(Invitation, to an intimate friend.)

“IDLEWILD,” ———,

June 9, 1890.

DEAR CLARISSA :

The Linnet Club will meet here next Thursday morning, at eleven o'clock. There will be no regular programme, but I expect several distinguished ladies from Boston, who will talk to us for an hour or so on topics of current interest. Do not ask who, or what; I want to have a delightful surprise for you. Besides these, our old friend Mrs. Burleigh is to be here; and she promises to recite Andrea del Sarto, and perhaps another of her favorite selections from Browning. Leslie Vaughn will sing, if there is time for it, and Maude Carroll's piano solos will fill up any possible gap, though I fancy there will be no need of them if my talking guests live up to their record for conversational agility and volubility.

Of course you will all stay to luncheon. There will be strawberries—and other things—but especially strawberries, which are this moment on the vines only a hundred yards away from my library-window—little green and white balls that will be large and red and luscious by sunrise on the twelfth; when, if nothing happens to prevent, I shall have the satisfaction of gathering them with my own fingers, before breakfast. At least, such is my ideal project.

Please bring your box patch-work. We shall have our work-baskets as usual, though probably we shall not have as much time for such idleness as at our usual meetings. But Louise wishes to learn the secret of that "box" during such pauses as may occur in the "feast of reason and the flow of soul."

If you can come early, say about half-past nine, I should be glad of your help in arranging the flowers and the other little conceits in the way of festal decoration; for I want the house to look like a pastoral poem to the dust-choked denizens of the town, who will arrive by the 11.15 train.

Let me hear from you by to-morrow if convenient.

Cordially yours,

ROSE ST. CLAIR EVANS.

MRS. JAMES A. FLEMING,

E. WILLOW STREET.

(The same invitation, to a comparative stranger.)

Mrs. Russell C. Evans will be pleased to see Mrs. Elliott D. Stacy at luncheon, on Thursday morning, June twelfth, on the occasion of a social meeting of the Linnet Club.

Hours

11 A. M. to 3 P. M.

Informal Programme.

"IDLEWILD."

R. S. V. P.

(Answer, to the first.)

E. WILLOW STREET,

_____, _____,

June 10, 1890.

MY DEAR ROSE:

Your Linnet Club Social is a charming idea; and how good of you to arrange it just in time to treat us to your famous strawberries! Of course I will come, as early as you desire. Is there anything that I can do in the meantime to help you in the evolving of your "pastoral poem"?—or in other more prosaic ways to assist in the preparations for entertaining your houseful of guests?

You know I am always

"Yours to command,"

CLARISSA.

(“Acceptance”—in reply to the second.)

Mrs. Elliott D. Stacy thanks Mrs. Russell D. Evans for her kind invitation for Thursday, the twelfth instant, accepting the same with pleasure.

TUESDAY,

June tenth.

(Regret, in reply to the second.)

Mrs. Elliott D. Stacy deeply regrets that an important engagement prevents her accepting Mrs. Russell D. Evans' kind invitation for Thursday, the twelfth instant.

TUESDAY,

June tenth.

(Invitation to a picnic party.)

BRIERTON, —,

July 15, 1890.

MY DEAR MRS. WHEELER:

My friends, Charlie Hope and Louis Russell, have come out from New York to spend a few days with me, and we are going to crowd all the amusement possible into the time. We have suddenly decided on a picnic at Sylvan Lake Park on Thursday. All of our family will go, with Uncle Reuben and Aunt Ellen—and perhaps Mrs. Ross and her niece. We have also invited Rob. Raymond and his sisters, who will doubtless accept, and bring with them their guests, some young ladies from Brooklyn.

I am sure our little circle would not be complete without you and your lively young people; and we cordially invite you all to join us. We shall have two of the Franklin coaches for the party. We purpose to start from our house at eight o'clock in the morning, spend the day at the Park, and return home by moonlight.

Please do not disappoint us. I should feel that we had missed half the pleasure of our outing if you and yours are not with us.

Sincerely your friend,

WILL. BLOOMFIELD.

MRS. ROBERT D. WHEELER,

16 E. TENTH ST.

Letters expressing thanks or appreciation.

A message of thanks should be sincere and hearty. In order to this, it is not essential that the occasion should be great. We can honestly appreciate the smallest kindness that is shown to us; we can even thank people for their well-meant blunders, if we generously recognize kind intentions, and good-humoredly ignore awkward mistakes. The essential part of thanks is given to the social spirit of the favor; and at no time should the selfish advantage that has come to us through the proffered kindness be allowed to appear uppermost in our minds. The girl who effusively thanks her father for a diamond ring, when he can afford to give her one, and poutingly accepts an inexpensive trifle, when reverses of fortune limit his purse to that extent, is a stranger to the true spirit of gratitude or appreciation. The "thanks" of such an one, if rendered into plain English would read: "I am glad I have got this thing that I want;" whereas it should be: "I am glad that you care enough for me to give me this, or anything."

The style of a message of specific thanks should be terse and gracefully complimentary, without fulsomeness or obvious flattery; and may be thoughtfully appreciative, or enthusiastically demonstrative, according to the nature of the case. When "true to nature" there is little danger of overdoing in the matter of earnestness of expression.

(Expressing thanks for an introduction.)

LINCOLN CITY, NEBRASKA,

September 16, 1890.

MY DEAR MRS. CLAY :

In the few hours of my sojourn here—one of my brief pauses while on the wing—I can write but a few words, to tell you that our party had a most enjoyable visit at Fort ———, where your brother, Colonel D——, as commanding officer, extended us a right royal hospitality. I feel that we owe our cordial reception to you, for I know that it was your kind letter of introduction that won for us such a marked degree of attention. We witnessed the drill and parade, after which we were shown everything of interest about the Fort and its surroundings. We examined the guns, and were patiently informed just how they were to be fired if ever it became necessary. Then we gathered grasses from the crevices in the walls, to “press” as mementos; and a few innocent grape-shot were distributed among those of our number who were not afraid of them—to be kept as souvenirs of our visit. An elaborate collation was served before we left, at which all of the officers were present; and also the charming wife of Captain Wilkins, and the wife and daughters of Surgeon Hendricks, who are the only ladies now at the Fort.

Altogether our visit was simply delightful, and one long to be remembered.

Please let me thank you for having made such a pleasure possible for us.

Believe me

Ever most truly yours,

ELIZABETH CONOVER DRAYTON

MRS. EDWIN H. CLAY,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

(Vote of Thanks, and accompanying Note.)

At a meeting of St. Agatha's Society, held on Thursday afternoon, October fifteenth, the following was unanimously adopted :

Resolved : That we extend our thanks to Mrs. Hannah More Brown for her interesting lecture-talk on the subject of "Child-Life in Oriental Countries."

Resolved : That we request Mrs. Brown to give us at an early date, subject to her convenience, another talk on some subject relating to her recent sojourn in Mexico ; this talk, like the previous one, to be for the benefit of the fund for foreign missions.

CATHERINE B. SCHREINER,

President.

ANET M. CONNER,
Secretary.

(Note from the Secretary, enclosed.)

SALEM, —, —,
October 16.

MY DEAR MRS. BROWN :

Your delightfully vivid descriptions of "Child-Life in Oriental Countries" have certainly awakened our very deep interest in those little sisters of ours across the sea. The young ladies of St. Agatha's Society have been impressed as never before with the actual human nature of the myriads of children whom we are too apt to think of only as so many odd or grotesque little puppets with whom the civilized American child can have nothing in common. I am so glad that you were able to talk to our Society just now, when we are trying so earnestly to awaken a practical interest in missions. One clear picture of the actual conditions of things contains the condensed eloquence of fifty sermons.

I personally express the hope that you will find it in your heart, and also within the bounds of your physical strength, to give the talk on Mexico. If you but half realize how much we want and need it, I am sure you will not say no.

Thanking you very much for my share of your kindness, I am

Very sincerely yours,

JANET M. CONNER.

MRS. HANNAH MORE BROWN.

(Thanking a singer, for a special favor.)

19 SOUTH — St.,
PHILADELPHIA, PA.,
May 10, 1890.

DEAR MADAM:

Those who were entrusted with the care of making arrangements for the funeral of my daughter, have doubtless conveyed to you our formal thanks for your courtesy in singing on that occasion. But we should feel that we had failed to do justice to our own best impulse if we sent no more definite and personal message. Permit me, for myself and family, to express our grateful appreciation of your sympathetic rendering of "I Know that My Redeemer Liveth." Song at such times often seems painfully inappropriate; but the sentiment embodied in those beautiful words of Scripture, associated, as it is, with music that itself seems inspired, needs only such a sweet and spiritual interpretation as yours to make it, as it is, the very voice of the Comforter. When the shadows fall on your own heart, may the consolation that you have given to others be fully recompensed to you.

Respectfully and sincerely yours,

ROBERT L. KENDALL.

MADAM JENNY LIND-BELL.

[NOTE.—Whether or not the singer was paid for singing on the above occasion is of no consequence. The spirit of thanks con-

veyed in this personal note ignores the professional and financial view of the case. In this instance, Mr. Kendall clearly discriminates between the mere fulfilment of a contract and the spirit in which the contract is fulfilled; the former is merely business, the latter is the foundation of social appreciation.]

Letters of Sympathy.

(Congratulation or Condolence.)

Letters of sympathy are the most exact types of the spontaneous. If not from the heart they are idle mockery, and were far better never written. A letter professing to rejoice or to grieve when no joy or grief is felt deceives no one—least of all one who is rendered keenly perceptive by his own acutely-stirred feelings.

Fashion of late years has shown a praiseworthy tendency to give ear to the counsels of common-sense; and one instance of this is the custom of sending merely a personal card to express either congratulations or condolence—or to return thanks for the same—in cases where the friendship of the parties is not close enough to make a spontaneous letter, full of real feeling and affection, the natural and truthful form. Indeed, letters of sympathy should never be written unless the spontaneous feeling inspires the writing; never, when you hesitate, and consciously dread the task or duty. In such case your card will say all that you have to say; and say it with far more tact than you would be able to

manifest if you attempted to manufacture a suitable state of mind, and to give your more or less artificial emotions a mechanical setting-forth in the hackneyed phrases of conventional congratulation and condolence.

When, then, should a letter of congratulation be written? When you cannot help it; when the real gladness that you feel demands impulsive expression.

When should a letter of condolence be written? When you feel irresistibly drawn to write it; when the impulse is strong within you to go to your friend if that were possible. If you *can* go, and speak the word of comfort, or, failing to command words, in dumb silence take the sorrowing one to your heart—that is best of all. But when distance separates you, let your written words be the wings of your thoughts, to bear your loving message to the heart sorely tried.

(Congratulating a parent on a daughter's success.)

49 SOUTH THIRD ST.,

—, —.

MR. STEPHEN B. HOLCOMB.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

I am greatly pleased to learn that at the recent Commencement of the — School of Fine Arts, your daughter Helen received the first prize for her etchings. It is quite in the line of my expectations, from what I have heretofore observed of her work; but it is none the

less gratifying to know that a Board of Judges of unequalled power of discrimination have assigned her first place among a group of "foemen worthy of her steel."

Let me congratulate you. The success of your daughter in her chosen work must be one of the most gratifying events to you. If the fact that your friends also rejoice can add any measure to your happiness, accept the assurance from

Your friend,

THOMAS B. CALDWELL.

WEDNESDAY,

June 11, 1890.

(Congratulating a young man on his approaching marriage.)

"THE MEADOWS,"

WEDNESDAY, THE 16TH.

MY DEAR WALTER:

Few occasions nowadays inspire me to assume the burden of letter-writing. My messages are chiefly sent through the medium of younger hands and more agile pens. But now and then an event of especial interest calls me to leave my comfortable arm-chair on the porch, to open the old desk and write "with mine own hand" words that I am unwilling to send at second-hand. Such an occasion is this, my boy, when word comes that you are about to take upon you the most sacred of trusts and the most blessed of privileges. From my heart I

can say that I congratulate you ; for I know that the wife of your choice is as good as she is beautiful, and that in her you will find a sheet-anchor. You have chosen wisely for a useful and happy life. There is no such thing as "single blessedness"; the man who finds his "other self" is the only wise and happy man, in my opinion. Fifty golden years was this demonstrated in my own experience, before my own other self was called home ; and now I dwell in happy memories, and wait in cheerful hope of a reunion with her who was to me the sweetest woman on earth.

The best wish that I can express for you, my dear Walter, is that your domestic life may prove as blessedly happy as mine has been.

With this hope, and my kindest regards to Miss Clare and yourself, I am

Sincerely your friend,

ABEL WORTHINGTON.

MR. WALTER D. NORTHUP.

(Congratulating an inventor on success.)

19 NORTH FIFTH ST.,

February 12, 1890.

MY DEAR FRIEND :

"To the victor belong the spoils," and yet he does not always get them, after all ; so that it is a case for special felicitation when he does. And I know of noth-

ing of this nature that has been so thoroughly a piece of good news to me as to hear that your long-studied and carefully planned and executed invention has proven a success that will at once take the tangible shape of a fortune of many thousands of dollars. If anything on earth is a man's very own it is the product of his brain ; and I rejoice to see the inventor, for once, the one to reap the substantial reward of his labor.

Accept my hearty congratulations.

Cordially yours,

PHILIP MAYHEW.

MR. GEORGE STEPHENSON.

(Congratulating a singer on her successful debut.)

WAYNE, —,

Wednesday,

November 5.

MISS ELLA RAYMOND :

May I add one little afterclap to the storm of applause that pronounced the verdict of your success last evening at the Academy of Music? I have often listened to your well-controlled voice, and felt that its perfect modulations left nothing to be desired ; but your singing last evening proved that even perfection may grow richer and deeper.

You are to be congratulated on your successful *début* as an oratorio singer. If I thought that idle vanity was

your inspiration, the charm of your voice would be lost upon me; but knowing the sincere and unselfish motives that have nerved you to face a public life in the use of your talents, I honor your genius and perseverance, and rejoice in your brilliant prospect of a well-earned reward.

Very truly yours,

MARY G. AIMWELL.

(To a candidate, congratulating him on his election.)

21 CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,

BRIERTON, ———,

November 6, —

HON. WILLIAM B. SENTRY,

Mayor-elect of Brierton :

DEAR SIR :

It may sometimes be a matter of doubt whether an entrance upon the arduous duties of a chief magistrate is a fitting occasion for congratulations. That you assume the office of Mayor at a time when peculiarly trying complications exist in our city renders this doubt prominent in the minds of your best friends. But no doubt exists that, however thorny the path in which your feet bravely tread, your administration will furnish an occasion for all to congratulate the city of Brierton, and for its citizens to thank you for the patriotism and public spirit in which you make the sacrifice of personal

ease which the conscientious performance of your official duties will demand of you.

My congratulations are for the city of Brierton ; may she be worthy of her newly-chosen Mayor !

Faithfully yours,

HENRY L. PRESCOTT.

(Sympathizing with a friend, on the loss of property by fire.)

BEVERLY, NEW JERSEY,

May 5, 1891.

MY DEAR SIR :

The morning papers give us startling reports of the forest fires in your vicinity ; and of the great damage to property, in which you are one of the heaviest losers. I can imagine your distress and despair at the loss of your valuable timber and buildings, and extensive nursery stock. I have wondered whether your fine young peach orchard in the clearing has escaped ? It seems hardly possible that it should, in the face of such a merciless sweep of flame.

It is hard enough to see property reduced to ashes when the insurance policy is waiting to make good the loss ; but to stand helplessly by, and see the product of months of labor literally "ending in smoke" under conditions where no insurance was practicable, is enough to make one desperate. But let me tell you, my first thoughts were of gladness—that you and your family

are safe, and that your most valuable household goods were out of the place of danger. You are young and strong and ambitious. Do not, then, be overwhelmed by this disaster, great as it is; but be hopeful and cheerful, and "try again!"

I am, as you know, inclined to be practical; so I will only say this: when you have had time to look around and take account of stock, and see what you need to set you on your feet again, then come to me; I shall have a tangible way of expressing my sympathy.

Your friend,

JOHN B. BLUNT.

MR. REUBEN TOILER,
FORRESTVILLE.

(Sympathizing with a friend who is ill.)

LAURELDALE, —,

May 28, 1890.

MY DEAR HELENE:

If I could come to you, instead of sending this lifeless bit of paper, you may rest assured that I would do so. I am very sorry to learn that you are again prostrated by rheumatism, and tied hand and foot to your couch. Knowing how you had planned to spend the early summer weeks, I can understand how greatly you are disappointed and discouraged at having to succumb to the old enemy that has tortured you so many times be-

fore. I hope this attack may not prove so severe as the last, and that it will soon yield to the treatment prescribed by your skillful physician. Do not feel depressed, but hope for the best.

I am coming as soon as I may to see you. Perhaps, with the doctor's permission, we may go to our favorite Blue Ridge retreat yet this summer. Let us look forward to it; for you may be sure we will not have you pining in that brick-walled prison one day longer than can be helped.

Meanwhile, my dear Helene, believe me, I am thinking of you every day, with deepest sympathy for you in your painful illness, and longing to hear of the change for the better. Be sure to send me word how you are, and whether I can be of any use to you in any way.

Your loving friend,

RUTH ALLEN.

MISS HELENE DORIAN,

— NORTH TWENTY-FIRST STREET,

PHILADELPHIA.

(Sympathizing with a friend whose child has been dangerously hurt by an accident.)

NEWBERN, N. Y.,

April 9, 1890.

MY DEAR MRS. BENNETT:

I am sadly shocked to hear of Harry's accident, and wish that I could relieve your anxiety and suspense with

reassuring words. I am thankful that he is less seriously hurt than was at first feared. I am told that the physicians have some hope of saving his foot; and if so, it will be a matter for deep thankfulness. But even if this cannot be, you have your son spared to you, by his almost miraculous escape from instant death. For this I rejoice with you. Let us hope that all will be well, and end in his complete recovery.

Accept my warmest sympathy; and give my love and a kiss to the brave little sufferer.

Your affectionate friend,

ELIZABETH C. RHODES.

MRS. WALTER P. BENNETT,
PEEKSKILL,
N. Y.

(On the death of a life-long friend.)

PORTLAND, OREGON,

May 28, 1891.

DEAR CLARICE:

Five days have passed by since the message came to me that Mildred was at rest. Five times the sun has risen to light a restless, struggling world; five times the silent night has brought fitful slumber to weary eyelids; and through it all, Mildred sleeps well! And now another day has dawned; and again we fall into our places in the accustomed routine, wondering how we can, yet

knowing that we must, go on, and on ; with the shadow on our hearts, trying to be cheerful for the sake of others whose lives must not be darkened by our private griefs. And all day long one thought repeats itself: Mildred rests! How trivial seem our transient cares! How purposeless our narrow ambitions! How fruitless the tasks that wear out heart and brain! Mildred rests!

Though so many, many miles away, my heart has followed you, as the hands moved steadily over the dial; through the hours of solemn pause while the silent form lay in the darkened chamber, to the hour when earth gently closed over all that was mortal of our Mildred.

What can I say to you, dear friend of my youth, as we grieve together beside the newly-made grave of your sweet sister and my own childhood's mate? What, except to tell you as well as I can how comfort has come to my own heart during these slow, sad days since the shadow fell.

When our thoughts were absorbed in the battle for the restoration of her health, the past and the future were almost forgotten in the terrible now, with its hope, fear, suspense; its wild shrinking from the ominous shadow, its bitter rebellion against the providence that pitilessly decreed the end. But the stroke has fallen; the first hour of shock is past. Mildred rests! Let us, too, rest in the Everlasting arms; and in the silence listen for the voices of His angels ministering unto us.

A strange experience has come to me; strange, be-

cause from a source that I do not understand; independent of any conscious activity of my own mind—nay, in resistance to my most active mental effort. Why is it? I have tried for days to recall Mildred's face as it has of late been all too painfully distinct to me—wan, thin, and lined with cruel suffering, yet composed in its sublime patience; I cannot picture it—not that face; strive as I may, memory refuses to recall those lineaments; for ever gliding between me and it, baffling my effort to see it, comes another form, another face—fresh, rounded, tinted with healthful vitality, bright with perfect cheerfulness—Mildred of long ago, as I have not recalled her before, for years! A hopeful, happy, earnest, womanly girl—thus she comes before me every hour; Mildred, with a quiet smile chiding my grief; with gentle hand stroking my hair in almost playful reassurance; Mildred, so perfectly free from pain that she seems dreamily surprised that I should remember her suffering; Mildred, with the buoyant, elastic movement of one forever done with doubt, or fear of disaster to her perfect peace! At rest!—not in unconsciousness, but in the fullness of an untrammelled existence; separated from us by so thin a veil that for one intense moment I realize how slight a transition it is to pass beyond it!

To-day I opened the inner drawer of my old rose-wood desk, which, from long disuse, contains nothing of later date than fifteen years ago. Turning over its con-

tents, I came upon one and another trifling memento of transient or forgotten things, many of them kept for no definite reason, lodged there by the accidental drift of the moment's convenience. But under everything else, were some crumpled sheets, interlined and retraced—"first copies" of some of Mildred's school-girl effusions; healthy sentiments of a sound heart and a clear head, rejoicing in the beauty of nature, and idealizing life and its aims and deeds; verses that were the natural outburst of song from a tenderly-poetical and gently-loving nature. How appropriate each sentiment to the dreamy-faced girl who seemed to hover near me as I read the closely-written lines—her voice from long ago! Has she indeed lived since then in a hard, selfish world? Has she known disappointment, and grief, and pain? And these years that lie between then and now—are they realities, or only the phases of a troubled dream? So, perhaps, it seems to her now; her prematurely failing health, her pain and weariness, her experience of the mockery of her sweet ideals—all these belong to a desert stretch of existence across which she has sprung at a bound, from the childhood of earth to her eternal youth. There is no suggestion of these darker hours in the wistful, earnest eyes, that are saddened only with a tender compassion for our grief; and I almost think her lips move, and her voice repeats for our comfort the promise: "They shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." It is true! To my soul comes

home the assurance of the truth that no logic can prove, because it lies beyond the bounds of "pure reason" with its human limitations; in that higher range of spiritual comprehension, where only "the inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding." A truth, vital and practical, grasped by faith, and almost by sight, so real is it to our spirit's consciousness.

Does this comfort you as it does me, in the midst of the constantly recurring sense of our loss of her earthly companionship? Are you not glad, dear Clarice—am I not glad—that when the hour comes for us to pass "within the low green tent whose curtain never outward swings," we have the assurance of finding—just beyond the filmy line that separates time from eternity—the realities of which we have here only the imperfect semblances; the permanent possessions of which our fleeting treasures have been only symbols; the unbroken communion with those whom we love, of which our few hours of comfort and many hours of denial have given us but a foretaste.

Mildred rests! not in inactivity. Who knows but that her sweet influence may be more to our lives now than it has ever been before! Who shall say that this vivid impression of her nearness is fancy? To me it is a joyful belief.

You have your work to do, I have mine; for we are still in the world of time and sense. Let us with whole-hearted purpose enter into the duties and the pleasures

of the present, meeting each day cheerfully, spending its hours rejoicing as becomes the children of the King; and when all is done, we, too, may enter into rest.

Dear Clarice, hand in hand, as ever, let us go, stronger and happier for each other's sympathy and counsel; bound together by our mutual joys and griefs, and more than all, by our glad faith and hope.

Your loving friend,

SYLVIA.

Letters of Criticism and Advice.

It is a thankless task to tell other people their faults, or to offer them any suggestions, however plainly you may see their need for such disinterested service. No one enjoys being the subject of adverse criticism; and only a magnanimous person can receive either criticism or advice graciously. When vanity is most eager for praise it begs you to "Tell me honestly, do you think that I do this well?" Sometimes it adopts a tone of woe-ful self-depreciation by way of provoking a flattering protest from the public; but how rarely its face lights up with grateful appreciation when you "honestly"—though with polite reluctance—answer that it "does not do well." The old experience of Gil Blas with the Archbishop is one oft-repeated in the social world. People ask for criticism when they desire commendation; they ask for advice when they want unqualified indorsement of their own predetermined plans. It is not strange that the majority, when thus appealed to, take refuge in the ambush of hypocritical approval, instead of "honestly" telling what they think—only to be thoroughly hated for their pains. It takes a very unselfish person to be a

faithful critic—a very discreet person to be a useful critic.

A letter of criticism or advice is never in order unless the relations existing between the parties give the writer his warrant to speak thus freely. An unwarranted letter of criticism or advice is merely a very disagreeable form of impertinence.

Parents have an undoubted right to criticise and advise their children. Teachers, within the scope of their relations to their pupils, have a similar right. Close friends may, on occasion, claim a like privilege. Older people may offer counsel to younger people in matters wherein age and experience count for wisdom. In emergencies, any one may obey his instinctive impulse to give counsel to any one else who stands in need of caution or advice. Such a case is a severe test of discretion. It may be intrusive to speak; it may be cowardly to keep silence.

In every case, the dispassionate judgment and the unselfish motive of the writer must be evident. Petulant fault-finding is not criticism; fretful suggestions are not advice.

A letter of this character should be pointed and fearless in style. However severe the message, the facts should be a sufficient apology. The writer having assumed the office of critic or adviser, should maintain his position unflinchingly, preserving his self-respect, and commanding the respect of his correspondent.

(From a choir soprano, criticising the conduct of the tenor, and entering a complaint to the choir master.)

68 NORTH LAKE STREET,
GRAMPTOWN, —,

December 8, 1890.

DEAR SIR :

Doubtless you were surprised and exasperated at my confusion and blunder in the solo phrase of the Te Deum, in the service yesterday morning. That you did not in the least suspect the cause of the disaster was evident from the expression of your face when you bent your critical gaze upon me.

I have borne for weeks a constant, and, I fancy, malicious, annoyance, that has marred the progress of rehearsals and interfered with the proper rendering of my part in the service; but hoping that you would observe it yourself and reprimand the offender, I have deferred making any complaint. I refer to the disorderly behavior of the tenor, Mr. Clarion, whose irreverence and ill-manners combined utterly unfit him to sing in a choir ostensibly assembled for sacred worship. To be accounted a wit appears to be Mr. Clarion's chief ambition; to which end he indulges in whispered comments calculated to distract attention and provoke laughter. His witless ridicule of the service is little less than blasphemous, and his personal jibes are often so rude as to arouse the bitter indignation of not only myself but other singers whom he does not scruple to criticise within

earshot, either pointedly or under the flimsy cover of innuendo. I seem to be the especial object of his attack when he thus amuses himself to while away the tedious hours of morning prayer. Can you wonder that I often fail to sing with either the spirit or the understanding?

If I supposed that you were fully aware of Mr. Clarion's conduct I should say nothing; my resignation would be the sole message that I could send to you. But your position at the organ obviously prevents you from seeing or hearing these things, which are done for the most part under cover of the full organ, and probably known only to the immediate sufferers from the infliction.

As you know, I can ill afford to dispense with my salary as soloist of the choir. To give up my position would mean a pecuniary loss to that amount. I think it would be most unfair for me to suffer such loss through no fault of my own; yet, unless the tenor rôle can be filled by a gentleman, I cannot longer continue to fill the rôle of soprano. I feel sure that when you are acquainted with the facts you will either control the behavior of Mr. Clarion, or accept his resignation.

Respectfully yours,

CELESTE TREMOLO.

MR. BOURDON DIAPASON,
Organist and Choir Master,
St. Philip's Church.

(Reply to Celeste Tremolo.)

19 KNIGHT STREET,
GRAMPTOWN. —,

December 9, 1890.

MISS TREMOLO:

Your note of yesterday is received, and I hasten to assure you of my deep regret that you should have borne for a single day the impositions of which you complain. As you say, my responsibilities at the organ leave me little opportunity to observe what takes place in the choir during the active portion of the service. This explains my ignorance of a course of conduct that has been so well concealed from general observation, and so concentrated in its power to annoy the few.

Your embarrassing mistake in the solo on Sunday morning certainly surprised and puzzled me at the time. It may be some satisfaction to you to know that you were not the only one to observe the act of Mr. Clarion in jolting your book-rack just at the critical moment when a difficult passage required careful and exact reading. The Rector, attracted by some unusual sound, turned to look at the choir just in time to see the apparent accident, and he immediately grasped the whole situation. As a result, I have to-day received from Rev. Dr. Sevier a polite but unrelenting request for Mr. Clarion's immediate dismissal from the choir, on the charge of conduct unbecoming a gentleman. Your message would have

been sufficient to bring me to the same conclusion if the Rector's request had not already settled the point.

I am happy to say that Mr. Clarion's place will be filled by Mr. Melodio, recently the tenor of the Fifth Presbyterian Church choir, and a gentleman of unquestioned culture and breeding.

Respectfully yours,

BOURDON DIAPASON,

Choir Master of

St. Philip's Church.

MISS CELESTE TREMOLO.

(From a Preceptress, to a young lady pupil who has grown negligent of study.)

RIVERBANK INSTITUTE,

Monday, December 3.

MY DEAR CHARLOTTE:

Do you remember when I told you last year that 'every 'exercise' that you wrote marked a distinct step in your progress?—that not a day passed without some record of your advancement;' and once you playfully retorted by asking me if you were "like a gourd vine, growing ten inches a day."

My perfect satisfaction with your study and systematic work last year, may account, in part, for the grave disappointment that I have felt when noting your apathetic work of late.

But it is not of the effect that I wish to speak, but of what I recognize as the palpable cause.

¹ You have this year formed a friendship for a classmate, a new-comer, brilliant, agreeable, magnetic; one calculated to be a leading spirit among her young companions; one who will in many ways lead them creditably; one whose good intentions no one will be unkind enough to question; but who, herself accustomed to depend largely on her native brilliancy, has therefore little appreciation of the merits of hard work, or the need of it to the majority of students. She has singled you out for her favorite, and keeps you at her side in a genial, social way that has proven fascinating to your responsive nature. Your time and thoughts are given to her, and the projects for recreation that she always has abundant leisure to carry out; for it makes little difference to her if her "essay" is left until the last moment; she hurries it through at lunch time, and succeeds as well with it in that impromptu fashion as she probably would in any other way. But you cannot follow that method; you, whose habit it has been to outline carefully, and correct, revise, prune, and polish until scarcely a fault was left for my blue pencil to mark, you cannot write essays at lunch time, and preserve your standard of composition.

I have felt compelled to speak to you of this absorbing friendship, and its evident effect to take the solid purpose and energy out of your method of study; and especially I must caution you against one drift of the

influence. Among your school-friend's other traits may be discovered a tendency to flippant sentiment and flirtation; and already she has wasted much valuable time in the desultory society of Mr. Doolittle, whose indolent life leaves him at liberty for this form of amusement. That she should fritter away her time with him is not so surprising; but when she induces you to bear her company in entertaining him, she is adding one more frivolous diversion to the many that she has already provided to draw you away from the straight line of progress toward a creditable graduation.

I am sorry to be obliged to tell you in all sincerity that I cannot see that you have thus far made one step of progress this year. You were on an excellent plane at the close of last year. Perhaps you have not retrograded, except in the way that one must who fails to advance when progress should be made. Your essay this week shows no advancement, either in thought or in expression, over the essays written six months ago; and whereas formerly every manuscript that you prepared was neatly written, folded and marked, you often now offer me a paper hastily finished in lead pencil, carelessly folded, and otherwise bearing the marks of an absent-minded or indifferent preparation.

Now, my dear Charlotte, I do not wish to say one unkind word of your friend and classmate, but I protest against your being at the mercy of her reckless leadership. She is brilliant; she will graduate, no doubt, and

thereafter shine more effectively than a dozen of her most pains-taking fellow-students. She is agreeable and attractive ; and she is conscious of her power, and fond of asserting it. But she is not the proper leader and controlling influence for you ; and I beg of you hereafter to make her society, her friendship, her suggestions, and her plans for and with you, all secondary to the prime consideration which you owe to yourself as an earnest, conscientious student. Come back to your own high standards, and keep only so much of the friendship of others as they are honest and unselfish enough to give you without demanding immeasurable sacrifices in return. Come back to the old time habit of daily marking the steps of your progress, and so bring your work to the standard it should reach by June of '91.

I have faith in your good sense ; and I also believe that your faith in my sincere interest in your welfare will incline you to listen to my criticisms without resentment, and cheerfully to accept the advice that I offer. If I can in any way help you to mark out your course of conduct so that you can declare your independence of an indiscreet leader, without giving offense to an agreeable friend, I shall be glad to do so. I hope we may soon witness a return to the good old methods that made your scholarship last year so creditable to yourself and so gratifying to your instructors.

Accept these suggestions with the kindest regards of

Your teacher,

- MIRIAM THOUGHTFUL

Letters of Gallantry.

Letters of gallantry are those that belong to the association of men and women in refined social life. Such letters express all degrees of regard and admiration, from the merest chivalrous courtesy that any man may show to any woman, to the marked preference that trends toward a matrimonial choice.

But letters of gallantry are NOT love letters. True, they may express a kind and degree of regard that is proper and right only under conditions where matrimony is a possible and permissible sequence, and when otherwise they would be merely the exponent of a reprehensible flirtation—that most vulgar and unprincipled of social mistakes. But no matter what its tone and degree, no letter is a love letter except when written under recognized and accepted conditions. “Love-making” of a desultory and inconsequent character may be carried on by means of fulsome letters wherein an unscrupulous man avoids “committing himself,” while under the semblance of an honest lover he wins the loyal heart

of an unsuspecting girl. Such letters are an insult to womanhood, so recognized when their cowardly aim and dastardly effect are realized. Similarly, a coquette may trifle with the affections of a true-hearted man, writing to him artfully-contrived messages that seem to express the tenderness of a womanly heart, but really contain—nothing. This kind of correspondence has no place in the social scheme of honorable and well-bred people.

It is a safe rule to regard all gallant letters as mere euphuisms, and answer them in kind; leaving serious interpretations for letters of straight-forward manly avowal.

Meanwhile, the delicate compliment of a gallant letter is very pleasant. Mingled, as it often is, with a touch of real friendship, or a spice of keen wit, it gives a phase of inspiration to social life that no other kind of letters can give; and when controlled by the dictates of good sense, good breeding, and good principle, it is a powerful factor in the development of the graces of character in both men and women, a social influence that no one can fail to appreciate.

A man never appears to better advantage than when gracefully paying tribute to womanly worth; a lady never appears more gracious than when awarding praise to manly achievement. In view of the personal charm with which it invests the individual, I wonder that so few men exert themselves to shine in the field of gallant correspondence, so few women train themselves to wield

a graceful pen in response to gallant messages. Perhaps it is because the mistake prevails of assuming that such letters are love letters, or liable to be construed as such. They are nothing of the sort. While they may be allied to the sentiment of love, they—with equal likelihood—may bear not the slightest relation to love or marriage, but simply exemplify the fact that the days of chivalry are not past.

EXAMPLES.

Invitations to drive.

1. (Formal.)

Will Miss Arthur honor Mr. Allyn by accompanying him on a drive to Franklin Beach this morning?

If agreeable to Miss Arthur, Mr. Allyn suggests half-past nine o'clock as a desirable hour to start.

Tuesday Morning

2. (Informal.)

MY DEAR MISS ARTHUR:

Will you help me to make the most of this beautiful morning by accompanying me on a drive to Franklin Beach? It will be an especial pleasure to me to introduce you to the new Boulevard, which I think you have not yet driven over. The distance to Franklin is about

eight miles ; but by the somewhat circuitous route, and the beach drive besides, we shall have at least twenty-four miles of driving. It will be desirable to start as early as half-past nine, in order to have the finest part of the morning for our drive.

If agreeable to you, I will call for you at that hour. Please do not say that you cannot go ; or I shall think that the sun has suddenly ceased to shine, and that it is not such a gloriously pleasant day after all !

Yours truly,

PHILIP ALLYN.

MISS MARIE ARTHUR.

Answers.

1. (Formal.)

Miss Arthur accepts with pleasure Mr. Allyn's polite invitation to drive this morning, and will be ready at the hour suggested.

Tuesday Morning.

Or,

Miss Arthur regrets that other engagements this morning prevent her accepting Mr. Allyn's polite invitation to drive.

Tuesday Morning.

2. (Informal.)

"WEST LAWN,"

Tuesday Morning.

DEAR MR. ALLYN:

How did you know that I was longing for a breezy drive this morning? Thank you, very much; let the sun continue to shine, and let it still be accounted a pleasant day—for I am, most assuredly, going.

Sincerely yours,

MARIE ARTHUR.

MR. PHILIP ALLYN.

Or,

"WEST LAWN,"

Tuesday Morning.

MR. ALLYN:

Your kind invitation to drive would be accepted with pleasure if it were not that I am obliged to remain at home this morning to receive guests who will arrive by the 11.15 train from New York.

It is certainly a glorious morning, and a drive to Franklin would be simply ideal. Thank you very much for your wish to share it with me.

Regretfully yours,

MARIE ARTHUR.

MR. PHILIP ALLYN.

Invitation to the Opera.**1. (Formal.)**

Will Miss Belford do Mr. Stockton the honor to ~~ac-~~
company him to the Academy of Music on Tuesday
evening next, to see The Grand Opera Company in *Der*
Freischutz ?

Thursday Morning,
January 16.

Answers.

Miss Belford accepts with pleasure Mr. Stockton's in-
vitation for Tuesday evening next.

Thursday.

Or,

Miss Belford regrets that she is obliged to forego the
pleasure of accepting Mr. Stockton's polite invitation
for next Tuesday evening.

Thursday,
January 16.

2. (Informal.)

191 E. SEVENTH STREET,

Thursday Morning.

MY DEAR MISS BELFORD:

The Grand Opera Company programme for next week
is announced this morning. Your favorite, *Der Frei-*
schutz, is to be presented on Tuesday evening.

May I have the pleasure of escorting you to the Academy on that occasion? You taught me to appreciate the smiles and tears of Von Weber; and I particularly wish to listen to this—his masterpiece—in your company. With the intensely selfish hope that no one has preceded me in securing this coveted privilege, I am

Most sincerely yours,

MAURICE STOCKTON.

MISS HARRIET BELFORD.

Answer.

167 LAUREL STREET,

Thursday.

DEAR MR. STOCKTON:

I shall be happy to accept your invitation to attend the performance of "*Der Freischutz*," next Tuesday evening.

I have long looked forward to the opportunity—so seldom given us—of seeing this opera well rendered. In view of our recent reading together of the pathetic life of Carl Maria Von Weber, it is peculiarly pleasant to me to be indebted to you for this thoughtful invitation.

Very truly yours,

HARRIET BELFORD.

MR. MAURICE STOCKTON.

(With a birthday gift of flowers.)

HOTEL LAFAYETTE,

May 1, 1890.

MISS HARTLEY:

In remembrance of your birthday, may I send you these flowers to crown you "Queen o' the May"?

That the fragrant blossoms may symbolize all blessings which "the slow, sweet hours that bring us all things good" may bring to your happy future, is the earnest wish of

Your sincere friend,

FELIX ROMAINÉ.

MISS ISABEL HARTLEY.

(Answer.)

— WEST SPRUCE STREET,

May 1, 1890.

MR. ROMAINÉ:

That so insignificant an event as my entrance upon the stage of life should mark a date to be commemorated, is each year an occasion of grateful surprise. But, accepting the rare sweet symbols of your regard and good wishes, I feel inspired to try to make the future better worthy the compliment of your kind interest and remembrance. With thanks for your thoughtfulness, I am

Sincerely yours,

ISABEL HARTLEY.

MR. FELIX ROMAINÉ.

(Requesting a lady to annotate a favorite book.)

LAURELDALE, ———,

Wednesday, June 4.

MY DEAR MISS LUCILE:

You may remember that you promised, not long ago, to mark my copy of "Lucile," so that my second perusal of it should be with "marginal notes" from the pen of Lucile Evans. I send the book herewith, asking you to make your promise good when convenient and agreeable. As you know, my opinion of your poetical namesake is not so enthusiastically complimentary as yours. She is not my ideal Lucile (with whom she has doubtless suffered in comparison), but perhaps after you have interpreted her for me something like yourself may shine out in her thus far uncomprehended character, and account for the strong bond of sympathy between the two Luciles.

With the full expectation of thinking just as you do by the time I finish your commentary, I am, poetically,

Your devoted disciple,

ROBERT SINCLAIR.

MISS LUCILE EVANS.

(Inviting a lady to attend a series of scientific lectures.)

—————, ———,

Wednesday, January 22.

DEAR MISS CLOUD:

I have just learned from President Work, of the Academy of Sciences, that Professor Herschel, of ———

University, is to give his series of lectures on **The Sun**, in this city on Thursday evenings in February.

If agreeable to you, I should be most happy to have the honor of your company in attending the series. The subject is a little heavy, but Professor Herschel makes it very entertaining as well as instructive; and with your well-known proficiency in Astronomy I am sure you would find it a rare treat; while I should account myself especially favored to have for my associate listener a lady so well informed and so appreciative as yourself. Sincerely hoping to have this great pleasure, I am

Faithfully yours,

JOHN SIRIUS.

MISS STELLA CLOUD.

(To a lady, sending a portfolio of ferns.)

PRESCOTT, ARIZONA,

August 16, 1890.

MY DEAR MISS LORING:

This same mail will carry to you a portfolio containing ferns, which I gathered and pressed for you during my recent camping out in the Grand Cañon. Perhaps they may serve to remind you of one who is away in the heart of the continent, but not so far away that he can forget his friends on the Atlantic shores. The resolute purpose that brought me to this remote interior region, and that inspires me to remain until it is accomplished, is all that subdues the feeling of homesickness when I

think of the two thousand miles that stretch between me and what I hold most dear.

My new surroundings do not divert me, for with the discovery of every object of interest and wonder, comes the impulsive wish that you, too, were here to see "Nature in her wildest moods." These feathery ferns may not, in themselves, represent the rugged grandeur in the midst of which they grew; but let them symbolize the gentle memories of you that have found place day by day in the midst of the rugged thoughts that practical business forces me to entertain.

That you may be having a most delightful summer at your favorite resort by the sea, and that you will not quite forget your "bold mountaineer," is the wish of

Your lifelong friend,

LAURENCE MCKENZIE.

MISS ELEANOR LORING.

(Reply to Mr. McKenzie.)

MANCHESTER-BY-THE-SEA,

August 23, 1890.

DEAR MR. MCKENZIE:

Your kind letter reached me on Thursday, and on the following morning the portfolio arrived, in perfect condition, notwithstanding its long journey over mountain and plain. The ferns are beautiful; and the arrangement and mounting of the several specimens reflects credit on your skill and taste. I shall give them an

honored place in my herbarium, and shall prize them very much.

In return, may I send you some tiny specimens of seaweed and shells which I found in the pools among the rocks when the tide went out? Perhaps if you listen attentively, they may tell you what they overheard in the conversation of a group assembled in our balcony only a few days ago (about the time that you were writing to me), and who were talking of "old times" and "Laurie" McKenzie. I will not tell you what we said—Ethel, and Jennie, and Millicent, and I,—but leave you to speculate. We all miss you very much, and shall be glad when the completion of your business permits you to return to our midst. In the meantime your far-off friends bid you God-speed in every noble enterprise of your ambitious life, and assure you that your place in their thoughts is never vacant.

Thanking you for remembering me so kindly I am

Ever sincerely your friend,

ELEANOR LORING.

MR. LAURENCE MCKENZIE.

(Requesting an exchange of friendly letters.)

85 LANE STREET,

BRIERTON, —,

May 5, 1891.

MISS TRACY:

Our party sail next Wednesday, to be abroad for several months. Our time will be spent chiefly in the

north of Ireland and in Scotland, the journey including a trip to the Hebrides.

Of course I shall write to mother and Frank ; and I should be delighted if I may also send you a line occasionally, if the privilege carries with it the corresponsive one of receiving a message from you now and then. I should feel loath to leave these shores knowing that I should not hear from you during all these weeks. Please promise me the pleasure of exchanging messages with you while I am absent ; who knows but that it may inspire me to do something brilliant in the way of "foreign correspondence" ? At least, it will make me very happy ; has that consideration any weight with my friend Louise ?

May I know your answer to-day ?

Yours in suspense,

HARRY LITTLEFIELD.

MISS LOUISE TRACY.

(Answer to Mr. Littlefield.)

19 BLAKE STREET,

BRIERTON, —,

May 5, —.

DEAR HARRY :

Of course you may write to me ; I shall be delighted to have a "foreign correspondent,"—that is, if you do not repent of your bargain when you find how little time a tourist has for letter-writing. In such case I will

forgive you ; but if you write, I shall be glad to hear from you.

Wishing you a pleasant voyage and the very best of good times exploring Her Majesty's domains, I am

Cordially yours,

LOUISE TRACY.

MR. HARRY LITTLEFIELD.

(Complimenting a lady on her social tact.)

SENATE CHAMBER,

WASHINGTON, Dec. 29.

MY DEAR MRS. WORTHINGTON :

I feel impelled to write to you, and express my admiration of the manner in which you last evening steered the social ship away from the rocks that constantly threatened its destruction. To descend to the literal, your management and leadership of the conversation at your dinner table, last evening, was all that averted an open display of ill-will between two of the number present, who have unfortunately become involved in a bitter feud, which fact they have not the self-control to hide on social occasions. Your graceful ignoring of the embarrassing conditions might have indicated entire ignorance of their existence, if it were not that such peerless generalship proves a thorough knowledge of the situation.

In the course of a long public life I have never ob-

served any instance of social diplomacy that I so longed to "cheer to the echo." I congratulate you upon the possession of a gift granted to so few—even of your gifted sex; and I also felicitate Secretary Worthington on the fact that in the discharge of his official duties his masterly discretion is ably sustained by that of his talented and accomplished wife.

With the highest respect, believe me, Madam,

Most sincerely yours,

HENRY CLAY SUMNER.

MRS. THOMAS B. WORTHINGTON,

Washington, D. C.

Love Letters.

Of all letters of affection, no letter is so far beyond the pale of dictation as the real love-letter. It represents the most sacred sentiment, the most reserved thought. It is what one has to say to one alone; it is the impulsive interchange between

“Two souls with but a single thought,
Two hearts that beat as one.”

Who else can tell them what to say to each other?

But some one may ask, What of those whose bond of mutual understanding is not yet made complete? What of the lover on whose stammering tongue the fateful question lingers yet unspoken? How shall he write the message that shall declare his heart's desire and hope?

Briefly, I would answer, do not write any such message. Go, yourself, and let your voice give utterance to your thought, while every line of your face interprets the sentiments that your words convey. Never write a letter of “proposal.”

But still it may be urged that many miles may separate the lovers, and the post-office may be the only medium of communication. If so, it is an unfortunate alternative; but if you must write, do so; but strive for no “effects.” Give your impulsive wish spontaneous expression, and let the truth of your feeling show in the unaffected simplicity of your language; and trust the responsive heart of your chosen one rightly to comprehend and reply.

At the same time let it be remembered that perfect structural accuracy is imperative in this style of letter. A commonplace error in composition may hopelessly disenchant a lady of cultivated taste. Just at the moment when she is most disposed to worship her hero she is chagrined to find him belittled to the stature of a very ordinary man, by some display of ignorance or other limitation that shows most ludicrously in contrast to the grand ideal of him which her adoring imagination has conjured up. A suitor once wrote, "Since you have went away, the world is a blank to me." It is needless to say that she has never "came" back—to him, the "moods and tenses" being a sensitive point with her. I verily believe that if he had used the perfect participle in its proper place she would have returned. So slight a thing may turn the scales; and yet, not a slight thing either; for it speaks volumes of the character and habits of the writer.

EXAMPLES.

1. (Urging a final reply to a marriage proposal previously made.)

GRAFTON, —,

Wednesday, the 16th.

ELOISE :

Will you not write to me and give me the answer for which I have waited so long? You know that I sincerely love you. The first time that I met you, you won

my heart. Your sweet face and voice, your grace and good sense, captivated me. I have thought of you ever since. For two years not a day has passed when you were not in my conscious remembrance. In the midst of business cares and ambitions, my chief inspiration has been the hope of some day having your constant presence and sympathy. No cloud has ever come between us; I feel assured of your friendship, but I earnestly desire to possess not only your friendship but your love.

Faithfully yours,

STEPHEN GRAVES.

(Answer—Acceptance.)

DEAR STEPHEN:

Your latest message is received. I have not purposely delayed my answer; but I cannot write all that is in my heart, so will not try. Yet, what need I say, except to tell you that I am glad to be, now and evermore,

Your own

ELOISE.

(Answer—Rejection.)

MR. GRAVES:

Most reluctantly I reply to your note just received. It is a sad thought that I must even temporarily give pain to one who sincerely loves me. I have tried to discourage your hope before it should become so strong that its denial could greatly affect your happiness, or

cause a shadow to fall on our hitherto unclouded friendship. I trust that you may soon realize, as I do, how unsuitable our marriage would be, notwithstanding our high regard for each other. Do not think too sadly of it. Believe me, I shall rejoice when I know that you have made another and a happier choice. And always I shall be, unchangingly,

Your friend,
ELOISE FARNHAM.

2. (Renewing a suit that has been unfavorably received.)

CECILE :

When I left you yesterday, I was feeling bitterly hurt by your petulant and satirical answer to my sincere avowal of my love. At the time I felt that, no matter how gentle and winning your next mood might be, I could never renew a suit that had met with such a cruel rebuff. But second thoughts are best ; I cannot give you up ; and I am willing to believe that it was through some fault of my own that you were led to answer me with such sharp decision. I cannot help thinking that you did not really mean to be so positive as your words implied. With an earnest hope that this may be the case, I once more beg you to accept my heart and my hand.

Yours, in suspense,
FELIX EVERARD.

(Answer—Unfavorable.)

MR. EVERARD:

It is with deep regret that I find it necessary to repeat my decisive refusal of your proposal of marriage. If my abrupt manner yesterday offended or pained you, I can only plead the shock of surprise which your question gave me, as the excuse for my hasty and incoherent reply. Until you spoke, no thought of your intention had entered my mind. Now, as I look back over the weeks of our association, I can see where, in my selfish thoughtlessness, I may have seemed to give you encouragement, when, in reality, nothing was further from my thoughts. I beg your forgiveness, if in any way I have trifled with a feeling the sincerity of which I never suspected.

With deep respect, and best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

CECILE MARON.

(Answer—Favorable.)

FELIX:

Second thoughts are best. Come back, and let me tell you what my second thoughts are—that is, if you will forgive all the unkindness that was implied in those inconsiderate first thoughts which drove you from me.

Your repentant

CECILE.

3. (From a diffident suitor.)

MY DEAR MISS GRACE:

I have tried in vain to speak to you of that which is nearest my heart. Sometimes, when I would have approached the subject, your merry rejoinders have seemed designed to discourage all attempts on my part to speak seriously. Again, when your mood was more earnest, and I have thought that the favorable moment had arrived, I have found it impossible to express my thoughts in suitable words; and an awkward silence has ensued. And yet, have you not known that my silence was filled with an intense thought of you? I love you, and my cherished wish is to win you for my wife.

Is it cowardly in me that I have not dared sooner to learn my fate? I have had little hope—so little that even suspense seemed less intolerable than the chance of total repulse. Pardon my awkwardness, and think only of my intense earnestness and unchanging love. Please write, and tell me that I may come to you, to hear from your own lips a willing yes.

FREDERIC.

(Answer—Favorable.)

DEAR MR. MEEKER:

Your letter has made me very happy. I will admit that I have not helped you in the least to overcome the diffidence that has so long kept you silent. Perhaps it

was wrong for me willfully to interpose a frivolous barrier to your earnest purpose ; but please forgive the impulse of coquetry in a mischief-loving girl who all the time loved you very dearly. You may come when you will, and then—I will answer your question.

GRACE.

(Answer—Unfavorable.)

MR. MEEKER :

I deeply regret that my efforts to save you the embarrassment of a direct refusal have been ineffectual. I have tried at all times to show you that I regarded you merely as an agreeable social acquaintance. You, yourself, admit that I have not deceived you with false hopes. That you have, notwithstanding, cherished so deep a regard for me is a fact that I deplore, since it must simply grieve us both ; but I trust that further reflection will convince you that you have mistaken the nature and degree of your interest in me ; and that after all some other one may more worthily fill this place in your heart and life which I must regretfully decline.

Sincerely yours,

GRACE CAMERON.

4. (A proposal indicating a prudent choice.)

DEAR MISS CLOUD :

Having had many opportunities to observe you, in your own home and elsewhere, I have learned to regard

you as the realization of my ideal of what a woman should be. My heart I have given into your keeping, and now I ask you to give me yours in return. Will you become my wife, and the honored queen of my home? If so, I shall be the happiest of men; and I promise to do all in my power to make you the happiest woman on earth. May I know your answer soon?

Devotedly yours,

JOHN STEADFAST.

(Answer—Favorable.)

DEAR MR. STEADFAST:

Your message has greatly surprised me; for I did not dream that so grave and earnest a man as you are, could see anything to approve in my insignificant little self; least of all, that you should wish to place me in the responsible position that your wife must fill. I am almost afraid to say yes, lest, after all, you may be disappointed in me; and yet, I do care very much for you, and I now know that I should be very unhappy if I were compelled to say no. How can I decide in such a dilemma? Advise me, and I will abide by your judgment.

FANNIE.

(Answer—Unfavorable.)

MR. STEADFAST:

I appreciate the compliment that you have paid me in your message. To be your choice would be an honor

to any woman. You know that I could never bestow my hand where my heart could not go with it. Much as I respect you, I do not love you, and therefore I must, in justice to us both, decline your courteous offer.

With sincere regrets, I am

Yours very truly,

FRANCES M. CLOUD.

5. (From a sedate, elderly gentleman.)

DEAR KATHERINE:

When I reflect on the fact that you and I are about equally alone in the world, and remember how often we have found comfort in each other's sympathy and counsel, I cannot help wondering whether we might not both be happier if instead of each living on to a lonely old age, we should join hands and walk together down the declivity of life? What say you? Will you take my hand, and give me yours, for the years that remain, knowing that a deep and abiding affection prompts my offer?

Faithfully yours,

BENJAMIN TRUE.

(Answer—Favorable.)

DEAR MR. TRUE:

Your frank proposal merits a straight-forward answer. I accept your offer, with sincere appreciation of the regard which it expresses. There are no friends like old

friends. We have had so many years of practically the same life journey that it seems but natural that we should travel the last few miles together. Since it is your choice, I gladly make it mine also.

Sincerely yours,

KATHERINE BAILLIE.

EPILOGUE

The last page is turned. Here I rest my pen; not without some gentle regret at leaving the little circle in whose joys and hopes and cares and sorrows I have seemed to be sharing while inditing these imaginary messages. Have you found in them anything that will help you to give your nebulous thought more tangible substance? If so, appropriate it; make it your own, as I have tried to make your possible environment mine.

And though no model given here may exactly meet the letter of your case, still, so essentially parallel are the experiences of all human lives that, at least, we cannot be so very far apart in spirit.

